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CONTENTS

TO THE

SECOND VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

Page.

MEANS RESORTED TO BY THE KING TO RAISE SUPPLIES WITHOUT THE AID OF PARLIAMENT . . 1

CHAPTER II.

WAR WITH FRANCE.—CAUSES OF THE WAR.—NATURE OF THE PROTESTANT PARTY IN FRANCE.—EXPEDITION TO LA ROCHELLE 29

CHAPTER III.

STATE OF AFFAIRS AFTER THE FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION TO LA ROCHELLE 75

CHAPTER IV.

MEETING OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT . . 86

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CHAPTER V.

Page.

THE HISTORY OF THE KING'S CONDUCT WITH REGARD TO THE PETITION OF RIGHT 100

CHAPTER VI.

RECONCILIATION WITH WILLIAMS: SIEGE OF ROCHELLE, SECOND EXPEDITION: ASSASSINATION OF BUCKINGHAM 140

CHAPTER VII.

CHARACTER OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM . . . 162

CHAPTER VIII.

OF ROYAL FAVOURITES 179

CHAPTER IX.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD, AND OF THE ATTEMPT TO ORGANISE A FRENCH AND CATHOLIC FACTION IN THE ENGLISH COURT . . . 199

CHAPTER X.

CHARLES THE FIRST AFTER THE DEATH OF BUCKINGHAM.—DISSOLUTION OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT 243

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST PATRIOTS 263

CHAPTER XII.

ORIGIN OF THE ANTI-MONARCHICAL PRINCIPLE IN MODERN EUROPE 306

LIFE AND REIGN

OF

CHARLES THE FIRST.

CHAPTER I.

MEANS RESORTED TO BY THE KING TO RAISE SUPPLIES WITHOUT THE AID OF PARLIAMENT.

When the Patriots abandoned their Sovereign to his fate, they retreated home sullen, indignant, and ready to conspire among themselves for the assumption of their disputed or their defrauded liberties. They industriously dispersed their "remonstrance," and the King replied by "a declaration;" but an attack is always more vigorous than a defence. The "declaration" is spiritless, and evidently composed under suppressed feelings, which, perhaps, knew not how to shape themselves. The "remonstrance" was commanded every where to be burnt; but the effect which it produced on the people we shall shortly witness.

The King was left amidst the most pressing exigencies. Charles the First has never been accused of a wanton profusion of the public wealth. Rapin even lays to his charge his strict economy in living, even to penuriousness. His tastes and his habits were those of privacy, and his claims on Parliament were solely for national objects, yet we now find him involved even in personal distresses. The King, from the first, had given up the pomp of his Coronation as "savings for more noble undertakings." He had mortgaged his lands in Cornwall to the Aldermen and Companies of London, to possess and enjoy till their money was repaid, and he had reduced his household.

Hume has alluded to the numerous wants of the Monarch, but he was unacquainted with the King's extremest necessities. To raise immediate supplies, the King's gilt plate was sold, and the royal distress was carried so far, that all the tables at Court were laid down, and the courtiers put on board wages. I have seen a letter that gives an account of "the funeral supper at Whitehall, whereat twenty-three tables were buried, being from henceforth converted to board wages," and there I learnt that "since this dissolving of house-keeping, his Majesty is but slenderly attended. Wages,

pensions, and debts, undischarged, filled the Court, not indeed with faction, but with discontent. We are not therefore surprised, that "since this dissolving of house-keeping his Majesty is but slenderly attended." Even long after this period, the poverty of the royal establishment was observed. Another letter-writer, describing himself to be only "a looker-on," alludes to the famous Masque of the Inns of Court, whose reminiscence charmed even the sage Whitelocke in the times of the Puritanic Administration, when he feelingly regrets that all these elegant "dreams had vanished." The "looker-on" exclaims, "I see a rich people and the Crown poor!" This strange poverty of the Court seems to have escaped the notice of our general historians. Charles was now to victual his fleet with the savings from the board-wages; for, in this humiliating economy, this "surplusage" was taken into account to carry on the war with Spain—without supplies!

The unpopular conduct of Charles the First, in abandoning his intractable Parliaments, who, in truth, had early deserted him, and in attempting to raise supplies by expedients of his own device, flattering himself, as he declared, that he could supply his wants "by other means than by the grants of his Commons," we must

consider as a political error—and it was an unavoidable one! It is this which renders the fate of the victim-Monarch still more pitiable. To reign without a refractory Parliament, and to find among the people subjects more loyal than their representatives, was an experiment—and a fatal one!

Charles imagined that he should have been able to reign by the aid of his people, separated from Parliament;—but Parliament was separating him from the people. He forgot that orators are heard, and that the multitude are all ear.

We have no reason to suppose that the King designed to wrest from the people more than he would have been empowered to exact by the accustomed legal grants, or than his present exigencies required. On his accession, Charles generously scouted the political management of Bishop Williams to secure a majority of the members for Court-interests. The young Prince, open and impatient, rejected the mean expedient. He was desirous of throwing himself into the hands of his Parliament. His conduct on this occasion has even melted into an effusion the cold drop that lingered in the pen of Mr. Brodie,—for even he has recognised the honourable impulse of the young Monarch.

It is however unquestionable, that Charles was early displeased with the obstructions he had unexpectedly encountered in the great national assembly; for so early as in 1626, speaking of Parliaments, the King declared in council that "he abominated the name," and no affection grew up between them as he advanced in his reign. In 1634, alluding to the Irish Parliament, his imagination forcibly conjured it up as "a hydra, which at home he had found as well cunning as malicious." And still later the King declared to Strafford that "Parliaments are like cats; they grow curst (*i. e.* cross) with age." All these notions of Charles respecting Parliaments, however arbitrary they seem to us, were, in truth, not so much the ideas of a despot, as of a monarch aggrieved. In that day the privileges of Parliament were more unsettled than those of the royal prerogative. Mr. Hallam has candidly observed, that "no statesman of that age was ready to admit the new creed of Parliamentary control over the Executive Government." "Executive Government!" is the purified and more definite term of the sovereignty of England, but the phrase could not have been comprehended by the political student of the age of the first Stuarts.

What is Tyranny but a rule cruel and inju-

rious, unjust and arbitrary? These are the epithets which now must describe, or rather stigmatise, the conduct of the Commons. It was cruel to the Monarch, whose best feelings it outraged, and whose situation it embittered and degraded. It was injurious to the State, whose honour it violated, and whose interests it impaired. It was unjust, because it was a direct infringement of the sanctity of existing engagements. And it was arbitrary, because it was wilful, absolute, irresponsible, despotic, and as little founded on principle, or required by necessity, as it was authorised by custom, or supported by law.

Was there not quite as much of "tyranny" in the Parliamentary denial of revenue, as in the regal force which attempted to supply a craving Exchequer? This determination of a party to withhold supplies from the Throne, is an important point in the moral history of Charles the First. The enemies of the King cannot pass it over silently. The philosophic Hume has cast the dishonour for ever in their face. They cannot deny it, they cannot even palliate it. What therefore remains? The insolence of him who exults in the dexterity of a criminal act—or the sneer of vulgar and heartless spirits who love to bring down the

great or the dignified, to their own base level. They triumph that the Commons were reducing the Sovereign to the sharpness of his extremest necessities — those Commons who flattered themselves that, in rendering the Sovereign their abject pensioner, they might wrest into their own hands that sovereignty which they were subverting. No one can deny that the first Parliament refused the supplies for a war in which their young King had engaged with the sanction of the former Parliament. The Commons might have escaped from this eternal reproach, had they consulted their dignity, perhaps their policy, in raising a bold distinction between the inexperienced Monarch and the unpopular Minister. Had they held their loyalty sacred and inviolable, by supporting the Sovereign, however energetically they might have protested against the unpopular Favourite, although Charles might have denied the resemblance of the man to the portrait they would have painted, still would they have left posterity a glorious lesson,—nor was Charles the First one on whom it would have been lost. In this manner, the first Parliament would have nobly acted, with wisdom, and not with cunning; with justice, and not with malice; with the elevated dignity of

senators, not with the petty policy of vulgar burgesses.* By the reverse conduct which the Parliament held, Charles the First only felt that he was betrayed by Parliament; and he scorned to barter their favour by that vulgar traffic of treachery—the immolation of the single victim who had long attached his per-

* The most recent writer on this subject is Mr. Hallam, who, though not insensible to the injuries inflicted on the Monarch, has palliated the conduct of the Parliament. I transcribe the passage for the benefit of the reader. "The first Parliament of this reign has been severely censured, on account of the penurious supply it doled out for the exigencies of a war in which its predecessors had involved the King. I will not say that this reproach is wholly unfounded. A more liberal proceeding, if it did not obtain a reciprocal concession from the King, *would have put him more in the wrong.*" This sentence must have cost Mr. Hallam some trouble—not in the arrangement of so many monosyllables, but rather in the nice adjustment of that delicacy of decision, which, while it discovers that the King was wronged, indicates how "he might have been put more in the wrong." More!—why, as it happened, and as we have shown, he was not in the wrong at all. This is a sharp conflict between the truth the historian loves, and the party which he loves more. What follows is much special pleading about the necessity that "a foundation of confidence should be laid between the Crown and Parliament." Heaven knows, that Charles the First had on his side confidence "over much" in his first Parliament. He had trusted all his hopes to them—and they were bankrupts in their promises.

sonal affections, and who was a man at least as much envied as he was hated. That cruel duty had not yet been inculcated on a British Sovereign, that his bosom must remain a blank to all private affections,—that severe lesson Charles the First was hereafter to be taught.

Amidst this world of troubles which was now opening on the nation, particularly on the return of Buckingham from the disastrous expedition to the Isle of Rhé, hard was the conflict of contending duties between the Sovereign and the people. The spirit and sense of the country gentlemen claim the most particular praise; for many of this honourable class, willing to assist the King in his distresses, but dreading lest such illegal shifts and arbitrary demands for levying money from his subjects might, if they yielded, be established into precedents, entered their prisons with patriotic fortitude. One instance represents many. George Catesby, of Northamptonshire, being committed to prison as a loan-recusant, alleged, among other reasons for his non-compliance, that "he considered that this loan might become a precedent; and that every precedent, he was told by the Lord President, was a flower of the prerogative. The Lord President told him that 'he lied!' Catesby shook his head, observing, 'I

come not here to contend with your Lordship, but to suffer.' Lord Suffolk then interposed, to entreat the Lord President not too far to urge his kinsman, Mr. Catesby. This country gentleman waved any kindness he might owe to kindred, declaring that 'he would remain master of his own purse.' The prisons were crowded with loan-recusants. The friends of these knights and country gentlemen flocked to their prisons, and the disturbed scenes in the country assumed a more alarming appearance. The great novelty and symptom of the times was the scattering of letters. Sealed letters, addressed to the leading men of the country, were found hanging on bushes; anonymous letters were dropped in shops and streets, which gave notice that the day was fast approaching when such a work was to be wrought in England as never was the like, which will be for our good." Addresses multiplied "to all true-hearted Englishmen!" When the country gentlemen petitioned for more liberty and air during the summer, it was policy to grant their request. But it was also policy that they should not reside in their own counties; their relaxation was only granted to those who, living in the south, consented to sojourn in the north; while the dwellers in the north were to

be lodged in the south. These country gentlemen insured their popularity by their committals, for many stout resisters of the loans were returned in the following Parliament against their own wishes. About eighty of these country gentlemen were imprisoned; they were not hardly treated, and the King granted them an allowance according to their rank and fortune. By an anecdote which Carte has given, there was a colonel who declared that he had cost his Majesty fifteen hundred pounds for his weekly allowances.

These country gentlemen and the Sovereign were thrown into the same unhappy predicament. Neither party could relieve the other, though unquestionably both would gladly have avoided their mutual persecution,—the enforcement of his claims by the Sovereign, and the refusal of them by his subjects. The party who had for ever divided them alone triumphed. Many were heavily fined for declaring that "they knew no law besides that of Parliament to compel men to give away their own goods," and the cry in return for "a subsidy" was ever "a Parliament!" The King ordered that those who could not subscribe to the loans should not be forced; but it seems there were orders in council to specify the names of those

householders who would not subscribe, and that those who could not pay in purse should pay in person. This proceeding is one of many evidences of a weak Government and strong measures,—of Charles's disposition to respect the rights of the people, and of the distresses which urged him to circumvent those rights.

What was the result? Every mode that the Government invented seems to have been easily frustrated, either by the intrepidity of the parties themselves, or by that general understanding which enabled the people to play into one another's hands. Those who were pressed were sent to the depot; but either the soldiers would not receive these good citizens, or they found easy means to return. Whenever they levied a distress in consequence of a refusal to pay the imposition granted by the Common-Council at Guildhall, which the people called *Yield-all,* there was nothing found but "old ends, such as nobody cared for;" or if commodities were seized on, it was in vain to offer pennyworths, where it was a point of honour that no customer should be found. A wealthy merchant, who had formerly been a cheesemonger, was summoned to appear before the Privy Council, and required to lend the King two hundred pounds, or else to go himself to

the army and serve it with cheese. It was not supposed that a merchant so aged and wealthy would submit to resume his former mean trade; but the old man, in the spirit of the times, preferred the hard alternative, and baulked the new project of finance by shipping himself with his cheese. When at Hickes's-hall the Duke and the Earl of Dorset sat to receive the loans; the Duke impatiently threatened, and the Earl affected to treat with levity those who came before them, with all the suppressed passions of popular indignation. The Earl of Dorset, asking a fellow who pleaded inability to lend money, of what trade he was, and being answered "a tailor," said, "Put down your name for such a sum; one snip will make amends for all." The tailor quoted Scripture abundantly, and shook the bench with laughter, or with rage by his anathemas, till he was put fast into a messenger's hands. This tailor was a remarkable person, one Ball, renowned through the parish of St. Clement's, not only as a tailor, but as a prophet. He had formerly discovered that Prince Henry was prefigured in the Apocalypse, and had prophesied that his Royal Highness should overthrow "the beast." The honest prophet, crediting his own prophecy, lent out money to receive it back double or treble,

when King James should be elected Pope! He was now consigned to a messenger; but hardly could even this prophet have foretold that twenty years after, tailors and prophets should employ messengers themselves!

Men of a certain rank, for their contumacy, were menaced to be sent to serve in the army for the Palatinate, or on other foreign employment. Among these, Sir Peter Hayman, a member of the House of Commons, opened his own case, and told his own story. The characteristic style of our sturdy patriot is amusing, and tempts me to lay it before the reader.

"I was called before the Lords of the Council, for what I know not. I heard it was for not lending on a Privy Seal. I told them, if they will take my estate, let them, I will give it up; lend I will not. When I was before the Lords of the Council, they laid to my charge my unwillingness to serve the King; I said I had my life and my estate to serve my country and my religion. They put upon me if I did not pay, I should be put upon an employment of service. I was willing. After ten years' waiting, they told me I was to go with a Lord into the Palatinate, and that I should have employment there, and means befitting. I told them, I was a subject, and desired

means. Some put on very eagerly, some dealt nobly; they said I must go on my own purse. I told them, *Nemo militat suis expensis*. Some told me, I must go; I began to think what must I? None were ever sent out in that kind. Lawyers told me, I could not be so sent. Having that assurance, I demanded means, and was resolved not to stir upon those terms, and in silence and duty I denied. Upon this, they having given me a command to go, after some twelve days they told me they would not send me as a soldier, but to attend on an ambassador. I knew that stone would hit me. I settled my troubled estate, and addressed myself to that service."

That great lawyer, Sir Edward Coke, pithily observed on these odious imprisonments and forced foreign employments. "No restraint, be it ever so little, but is imprisonment, and foreign employment is a kind of honourable banishment. I myself was designed to go to Ireland: I was willing to go, and hoped if I had gone to have found some Mompessons there. There is difference when the party is the King's servant, and when not."

These illegal and irregular contributions of money, to which Charles the First was forced in his great distresses, have furnished some

scenes of arbitrary power, and even of tyrannical courses, for those historical painters, who, with a hatred of the Monarch, have left us such a distorted portrait of the Man. The King declared, that "not one penny borrowed by loan should be bestowed or expended but upon those public and general services wherein every one of them, and their wives and children, and posterity, have their personal and common interest." The Court party pleaded, that the sums thus reluctantly wrested from individuals were much less than the subsidies which, had Parliament sympathised with their Sovereign, would have been granted. Lilly, who had himself been a collector of the ship-money, and who had no prejudices in favour of Charles, tells us that his proportion of taxes in the King's time was twenty-two shillings and no more; while the assessments which he had to pay at the time he was writing under the Commonwealth were nearly as many pounds! The Commonwealth then sold their liberty dear. Cromwell did not dispense it at a cheaper rate. However, the nation, it appears, was more glorious, but the individual was pinched for it!

The great financial difficulty of Charles the First was to discover the fairest means of

raising supplies. This investigation formed the perpetual discussion in Council—but the contrivances and the artifices to disguise the forms of the royal exactions, as is in the nature of such things, were often equalled by the contrivances and the artifices of the people to elude them: and the King's Exchequer often drew little profit by the odious measures in which there was at least as much of distress as of tyranny.

At first, Charles had hoped by the pathetic appeal to "Benevolences" that he should have touched the hearts of the resisters of unparliamentary taxation, but the term proved unlucky, and was construed into "a Malevolence," for the nature of the thing, said a member, does not agree with the name. When Benevolences lost all their virtue, the subject was cautiously informed that the sum demanded was only a *loan*—or he was honoured by a letter under the *privy seal*, till privy seals got to be hawked about to persons coming out of church. At length, as the distresses of the Monarch rose on him, appeared the *general loan*, which in fact was a forced loan. Ingenious in the destruction of his own popularity, a new mode of "Secret instructions to Commissioners" was contrived. Those gentlemen were to treat apart with the lenders,—never

in the presence of any other person; beginning with those who were likely to set the best example, they were then to show the roll to the more reluctant. Their skill was to find out those who could afford to bear the largest rates; but how were they to acquire this secret and inquisitorial knowledge? After a number of interrogatories had been put to a person concerning others who had spoken against loan-money, and after having drawn from him the arguments which had been used against these loans, the communicator was to be charged in his Majesty's name, and upon his allegiance, not to disclose to any other person the answers which had been enforced from him by the Commissioners. This is a striking instance of human fatuity. A weak, rather than a tyrannical Government is attempting arbitrary measures; and they seek to obtain a secret purpose by the most open and general means; a self-destroying principle!

Shall we at once condemn the King for his arbitrary measures in levying money? It is possible that such were never in his contemplation. Charles, whose favourite literary amusement seems to have been our dramatic writings, when once reading a manuscript of Massinger's, entitled "The King and the sub-

ject," found this not unappropriate passage was given to the tyrant Pedro of Spain:—

"Monies! we 'll raise supplies what ways we please,
And force you to subscribe to blanks, in which
We 'll mulct you as we shall think fit. The Cæsars
In Rome were wise, acknowledging no laws
But what their swords did ratify."

Against this passage Charles the First wrote

"This is too insolent, and to be changed."

The criticism of Charles was not as excellent as the feeling which dictated it. The Master of the Revels, who has afforded us this anecdote from his office-book, adds, "It is here entered for ever, to be remembered by my son, and those that cast their eyes on it in honour of King Charles my master." The courtly Master of the Revels might have been surprised that the King appeared to have been disgusted with his own practice.

The expedients which Charles the First was often reduced to practice, sometimes placed him in a very ridiculous position, from his earnestness to obtain his purpose without a manifest injury to the subject.

The oppressive system of monopolies still practised on the Continent, had long been a grievance in this country. Monopolies were

a wretched mode of drawing a certain revenue from a particular article, by the contractors engaging to make a stipulated annual payment for their privileges. When Government grants such a patent for the sole vending of an article or manufacture, it extinguishes the highest virtues of commerce; competition and its consequences, improvement and low prices.

A monopoly of soap was granted by Charles the First to certain courtiers. To render this company more odious, in a pamphlet of the day we are told, it was composed of "Popish Recusants." Connecting Popery with soap-boiling was, it seems, no clumsy artifice to rouse popular clamour. But as I often find that these monopolies were chiefly in the hands of Roman Catholics, I have sometimes thought that as the Catholics were thrown out of the more honourable professions, some may have turned their attention to this species of commercial speculation. The Roman Catholics in our country occupied the same station as the Hebrews do now—they were driven to pursue baser occupations, from being prohibited the more liberal ones.

The proposal for making soap, no doubt originated with one of those projectors who abound in periods of public distress. In the

new patent, every good quality of soap was specified, a lower price was fixed on, and the King was to receive ten thousand pounds per annum. On these specious pretences this monopoly was granted. The regular traders would in their own defence practise every artifice to damnify the new invention, and a civil war was carried on between the old and the new soapers. It was alleged that the new soap blistered the washer's hands, burnt the linen, scalded the laundresses' fingers, wasted infinitely in keeping, being full of lime and tallow. In its defence, it was urged that barrels of the new soap had been sophisticated by the malice of the old soapers, throwing in a quantity of rhubarb, or a glass of sack, with other adulterations, and finally that "the King and the Lords were well satisfied with the goodness of this new soap." Complaints, however, were still rife. "The new company of *gentlemen soap-boilers*," however, procured Mrs. Sanderson, the Queen's laundress,* to subscribe to the goodness of their soap; but Mrs. Sanderson "told Her Majesty that she dare not wash

* Bridget, daughter of Sir Edward Tyrrell, Knt., and wife to William Sanderson, the historian, who, at the Restoration was made gentleman in ordinary of the King's Privy Chamber, and knighted.

Her Majesty's linen with any other but Castile soap;" and, to the shame of those ladies who had subscribed their names to the certificate of the excellence of the new soap, it was known that they, like the Queen's laundress, privately did, what they publicly professed they did not,—use the Castile soap! "On Sunday last," says a letter-writer, "the *King and Council* set again upon the soap business. On Monday the *Lord Mayor* was sent for to the Court, where *His Majesty and the Lords* rebuked him for his partial proceeding in favour of the old soap, disparaging the new! Their lordships sent a warrant, with four of their hands to it, to bring a poor old woman out of Southwark before them, for speaking invectively against the new soap! She was well chidden and dismissed." On this occasion there seems to have been more than one old woman present at the Council. "Four Lords" actually signed this warrant! What were these preux chevaliers thinking about at the time!

And in truth the Lord Mayor had not fairly incurred the royal rebuke! His lordship and the whole *Court of Aldermen* had consented to join with the *Lieutenant of the Tower*, and *several Knights, to hold two general washing days at Guildhall*, where every one might

come and wash their linen before the worshipful assembly. Many came, but chiefly of the feminine gender, who, as all washerwomen, are accustomed at their work, could not hold their clack. So loud and clamorous was the babble against the new soap, that it appears that his lordship with the Court of Aldermen and the Lieutenant of the Tower, and the Knights were panic-struck. The letter-writer proceeds, "The *Lord-Mayor*, by the King's commandment, received a shrewd reprimand for his pusillanimity in this business, being afraid of a troop of women that clamorously petitioned against the new soap. My Lord Privy-Seal (the Lord Mayor's brother-in-law,) was to give it him at the Board, and did it very sharply." In a word, the Lord Mayor was treated by "the King and council" as they had before used the "old woman from Southwark," who, probably on the occasion of "the two general washing-days at Guildhall," avenged her cause among the heroines who, armed only with their tongues, put to flight the whole Court of Aldermen and the Lieutenant of a royal fortress.

All this was only ridiculous. The monopoly did not perform its promises, the soap grew worse and worse, and the King's revenue less

and less. After many vexatious persecutions, for "the new soapers" made "forcible entries and seizures" on the old, the new yielded up their patent to the old. So that these were compelled to re-purchase at an enormous rate the right of following their own trade, and having the duties doubled.

The patent professed that this monopoly arose from the royal care to promote the home manufactory, in preference to the foreign commodity.* This soap monopoly was no doubt considered by the Cabinet as a fortunate measure, for the Lord Treasurer finding himself opposed by the Lord Marshal, observed, "if you will be against the things that are for the King's profit, so that he cannot have money, your pension must be unpaid.†

An instance more honourable to the honest feelings of Charles the First, on another financial expedient, is sufficiently curious.

Among the extraordinary expedients of the Duke of Buckingham, was that of a new coinage, which offered an immediate certain profit. The King was to have more than a

* The Patent with its particulars may be found in Rushworth, ii. 189.

† Strafford's Letters, i. 372.

double number of shillings out of a pound of bullion. The Duke had already executed the project, and sixty thousand pounds of these debased shillings were actually issued. Most of the merchants who were summoned before the Lords in Council, to deliver their opinions, declared it to be a ruinous scheme,* but the Duke found supporters with an opposite party. On a second meeting, at which Sir Robert Cotton was present, he drew out a paper, and by his Majesty's command, began to read.†

* Perhaps our political economists may be curious to learn the arguments which their homely fathers used on this occasion. The merchants said that at first the King might perhaps gain largely by this new coinage, but it would ruin trade by the alteration of the exchange, would greatly reduce the revenues of the King and all men, enhance the price of all things, raise the value of Spanish bullion, and afford a new profit to foreign countries by counterfeiting our coin, and by this means even deprive the King of his expected profits. On a similar conduct under the inept administration of the Duke of Lerma, by doubling the value of the copper coin, copper money was poured into Spain from all parts, and their silver suddenly swept away, as if it had been by enchantment. It is evident that Government acquires nothing by raising or lowering the standard of the circulating medium.—Mariana.

† This paper, which we have found in a MS. letter, dated September, 1626, is however printed among the posthumous

The third article startled the Duke, who looking sternly, and leaning over Sir Robert's shoulder, exclaimed, "Sir Robert Cotton, are you come hither to instruct the King and Council?" This silenced Sir Robert, but in defiance of the looks and taunts of Buckingham, who stood beside the royal chair, Cotton kneeling down, delivered the paper into the King's hands, beseeching his Majesty would by no means omit reading it over. Charles graciously accepted the paper. The Duke, who counted on the strength of his present party, and the absence of most of the others, eager to conclude, moved that the Lords might sit instantly to close the Council. Again, Sir Robert Cotton cast himself on his knees, requesting his Majesty to observe, that the majority of the Council were absent, and that a business of vital importance to the nation might not pass so imperfectly examined, and humbly entreated that the Council might adjourn to the next day. The King granted his request against the Duke's motion.

The same night, before he retired to rest,

pieces of Sir Robert Cotton, which Howel edited. It could not therefore be *Sir Thomas Rowe's speech*, made at the Council-table in *July*, 1640, though as such it is published by Rushworth, in his Collections.

the King studiously perused Sir Robert's paper. On the following day, when his Majesty appeared in Council, no one could discover by his countenance to which side he inclined. Having heard different opinions, the King, with his peculiar ability in summing up arguments, convinced the Lords of the Council, that he had made himself perfect master of the subject, and decided against the Duke.

The Master of the Mint was severely reprimanded for having issued out this new coinage, and a proclamation was sent out, that "all monies of gold and silver coined since the issues of this debased coin, should be esteemed as bullion, and not be current." Charles in his distress not only would not do wrong, but eagerly repaired the mischief which had been done, and this public repulse of an adopted measure of the Favourite's, with the judicious preference he gave to the knowledge of Cotton, is not only said to have greatly mortified Buckingham, but appears "to have raised some hopes and exultation among the moderate part of the Opposition."

The result of our researches must be, that the arbitrary mode of levying supplies without the aid of Parliament, when Parliament refused to aid, does not prove, as is usually as-

sumed, any preference in Charles to tyrannical modes of raising money. Had Charles been a tyrant, like other tyrants, he would have opened a much shorter and absolute way.

CHAPTER II.

WAR WITH FRANCE.—CAUSES OF THE WAR.—NATURE OF THE PROTESTANT PARTY IN FRANCE.—EXPEDITION TO LA ROCHELLE.

"CHARLES," says Hume, "as if the half of Europe, now his enemy, was not sufficient for the exercise of military prowess, wantonly attacked France."

The war with France has been traced to the personal resentments of Buckingham, for an affront he received from the French Monarch, in consequence of his ambitious gallantries with "a lady of a very sublime quality," as Lord Clarendon, in his courtly delicacy, guardedly describes the eminent female. She was a lady who exercised in "a sovereign degree all the coquetry and intrigue of her nation," says Cardinal de Retz, furnishing us even with a list of her lovers, in which he has not omitted the English Duke. When Buckingham proposed

to revisit the French Court as ambassador, Bassompierre, in conformity with his instructions, assured him, that for reasons well known to himself, he would not be received. Lord Clarendon's anecdote, that Buckingham "swore in the instant, that he would see and speak with that lady in spite of all the power of France," may be true enough, and in this lover's vow his lordship detects the origin of the French war!

Our philosophic Hume, with his habitual ease, adopts the Court-gossip of Clarendon, which was too pleasant and romantic entirely to be passed over by memoir-writers, but his sagacity could not fail to betray its astonishment. "All authentic memoirs," says Hume, "both foreign and domestic, represent him (Buckingham) as actuated by motives which *would appear incredible*, were we not sufficiently acquainted with the violence and temerity of his character."

If we have now learnt the cause, the story would remain imperfect were we not also informed of the intention of the war, and the means of carrying the covert point.

Buckingham's end in a war with France was the remote view of being employed as the ambassador, who was to reconcile the two

crowns, and by this circuitous route to arrive at length at the Louvre and visit his mistress.

Were this the fact, Buckingham must be considered as a more intrepid hero, than any we may find in a folio romance; for well he knew that, though by no means a disappointed lover, his double rival in love and politics, the famous Cardinal, had an eye over him, whose glances were poignards; and that the French noblesse had vowed to avenge in the blood of the foreigner the honour of their Sovereign. He knew this, for he had hardly escaped assassination. It must be acknowledged that, when we calculate the nice contingencies and the uncertain chances of the plan which made a war between two great nations, because in accommodating a consequent peace, an errant knight might acquire an opportunity of visiting a fair lady, at whose feet he was to perish, the adventure might enter into a political system, which would have illustrated the history of the immortal Don of Cervantes.

Well may we exclaim with Hume, that the assigned cause of this war with France "is incredible;" but the "incredible," in this instance, served to overcharge all his accounts of Buckingham. Hume, in his day, was not supplied

with some of the most valuable materials of our history at this period. He had taken up all the popular impressions, and the more obvious and less favourable features of this historical personage.

Dr. Lingard has sensibly observed, that "it is plain that whatever may have been the secret motives of Buckingham, he must have alleged some very different reason in defence of a measure which threatened to prove so prejudicial to the interests of his own Sovereign." And, surely, had our historians less servilely copied such unhistorical facts, and such unnatural pretexts from the Lord High Chancellor of human nature, and had looked into what had recently occurred between the French and English courts, and what was then passing in France, they might have discovered causes more obvious, and interests far deeper, to instigate a French war than the "incredible one."

The elements of war are often gradually accumulating before they settle into an open rupture. Like petty domestic quarrels, they seem insignificant and partial, till at length we are surprised that these fractional disputes close into one mighty and irreconcilable enmity.

The marriage of Charles was highly political

on both sides, and as such it was acted on immediately by the French Cabinet. The French party here was obnoxious to Charles. I will not anticipate what must soon be investigated. The dismissal of the French Household had nearly produced a war. Charles was prepared to offer the alternative, and it would have been accepted by Louis, had the French monarch at that moment been in a condition to maintain one. This is the opinion of one of the Capuchins who afterwards attended on the Queen, and it seems probable, when we observe the French Government so fully occupied in putting down the Huguenot Insurgents; a war with England would have reinforced the French Protestants with a potent ally.

Whether Louis considered himself aggrieved by the violation of the treaty of marriage, may be doubtful, but it is certain that shortly afterwards Charles had great cause of complaint against Louis for the violation of a more important pact. One of the national objects of Charles was carrying on the war in Germany, to procure the restitution of the Palatinate. It was this which he had considered would have made the French match more popular with his people, and a treaty to oppose the excessive power of the House of Austria had

been arranged by the alliance with France, a plan which harmonised with the grand design of Cardinal Richelieu, but in which the French monarch, supposed to have been influenced by Spanish intrigue and the exhortations of the Jesuits, had not so heartily concurred as the French Cabinet. On the first occasion on which this treaty was required to be acted on, the condition was broken. The great military adventurer, Count de Mansfeldt, who had been offering his sword to France and England to open a campaign in Germany, was now commanding our troops, assembled at Dover, waiting an order to land at Calais, his passage through France having been agreed to, when he received a sudden refusal. We will show how the French ambassador and negotiator, as a man of honour, felt this unexpected infraction of the treaty.

The Count de Brienne, on the point of his departure, one evening preparing to attend a banquet given by Buckingham, confesses that this fête was much and suddenly troubled—by the arrival of a courier, whose dispatches overwhelmed him with shame and mortification. "An order came from the King to declare that *notwithstanding all our conventions,* the six thousand English, under the command of Count de

Mansfeldt, would not be allowed to land at Calais. I was struck with surprize; I hastened to D'Effiat (the French ambassador); I told him that he must now prove his influence over the character of the Duke, to extricate us decently from this strange dilemma." They hastened to Buckingham, who shared in the astonishment of the French ambassadors. Buckingham expressed himself in a sensible and dignified manner. "We must now, therefore, give up every idea of combining our armies; England has no right to dictate a law to his most Christian Majesty, but we may be allowed to complain of his Majesty for having broken his word, and for not executing what he had engaged to perform." Brienne was so overcome by his feelings, that he could only look in silence on D'Effiat, to urge him to try his boasted dexterity and ascendancy over the English minister. D'Effiat, after highly complimenting Buckingham, offered some subtle reasons for this change in the French Cabinet, "but," says De Brienne, "all that D'Effiat said was useless and only served to put the Duke into a passion."

What follows was an attempt by De Brienne to accommodate affairs by some other means. They joined that evening the banquet at the

Duke's, which was prolonged till late in the morning, when De Brienne gladly took an opportunity to set off for Dover, so eager to escape from the reproaches of Buckingham, that instead of taking three days, the usual time to reach Dover, he got there by extraordinary exertions, in six-and-thirty hours.*

But a more pressing motive for war with France originated in that system of politics which since the administration of Elizabeth, had created one of our great state interests—the adoption of the cause of foreign Protestants. Whenever the standard was raised by those of "the Religion," as the term was applied at this period, they always looked up to England as their nursing mother, or their armed champion; and in England the malecontents of France were sure to find a secret

* It may be worth noticing, and it proves that this failure of the French King of his promise was not forgotten, that afterwards in the address of Buckingham's Secretary to the Rochellers, it is particularly ascribed to the influence of the Jesuits and Spanish interest over the French monarch. "By means of this faction the refusal of a passage to the army in England provided for Count de Mansfeldt, at the moment of their departure, which had been solemnly agreed on, the liberty of Germany was betrayed, and twelve thousand English had nearly all perished." Le Mercure François, xiii. 805.

or an open ally. But war on these occasions did not always show itself with an open front, nor was it always heralded by generous principles; it crept out of secret intrigues, and wound about in concealment, till concealment ceased to be practicable. The French on their side, did not less insidiously practise with the Scots before the union of the crowns, and afterwards, in the reign of Charles, with the Presbyterians of Edinburgh, and the Parliamentarians of London. In this clandestine wisdom, on both sides glory lost its lustre; for the allies of either country were conspirators or insurgents. Each party imagined that it strengthened itself by weakening the other, and perhaps one of the most active agents in the English Revolution under Charles the First, was the redoubtable and politic Cardinal de Richelieu, who fomented our national troubles, in order to confine the active spirit of the English monarch within his own island.

The leading chiefs of the French Protestants, or as the French describe them, the Calvinists of France, were the Duke of Rohan, and his brother Soubise. Of a princely origin, the Duke was allied to many crowned heads, but his genius was even more elevated than his rank. His heroism was only equalled by his

fortitude; he was one of those great commanders who remain unconquered when the enemy is most successful. Such were his talents, that he would have been a distinguished man in Europe, had he been born among the obscurest classes of society.* His brother Soubise, with whom our own history is more intimately connected, participated in all the party or the factious zeal of his eminent brother, without any portion of his courage or his capacity.

The Protestants of France then constituted a more formidable body in that kingdom, than the Roman Catholics in England. Their general assemblies, which annually met, always occasioned great uneasiness in the French Cabinet, and they were so numerous and powerful as to have their resident deputies at the Louvre, ever prompt to disturb the royal audience by voluminous *cahiers* of remonstrances and petitions. If Henry the Fourth, as a great Statesman, had

* His "Memoirs" are well known, but a little volume composed in his retirement at Venice, *Les Interets des Princes*, was long the manual of politicians, and may still be studied. It is here we find this curious reflection, "England is a great animal which can never die, unless it destroys itself." The Duke was in England and Scotland. Elizabeth called him "her knight," and James the First requested him to stand sponsor at the baptism of Charles the First.

complied with the forms of the national religion, he had never forsaken the cause of those to whom perhaps he was secretly attached; and the tolerating Edict of Nantes had conferred on his Protestants, as large a portion of freedom as could be safely allowed to a hostile minority in the State.

The regency of Mary of Medicis had passed in struggles with the haughty Princes of the blood, and a nobility not less potent than factious; insatiate in their claims, and restless with ambition, they seemed at times to aspire to separate sovereignties. Disdaining the feeble government of a female, whose views seemed narrowed to her palace, and who had concentrated her passions in her Florentine favourites, these Princes and Dukes were in a perpetual state of confederacy and rebellion. At length the Favourites fell the hateful victims of the State. Among the powerful malcontents the Huguenot party had found friends and chieftains, who had often coalesced with the Protestants, without always being Protestants themselves. Four civil wars, and frequent revolts, were as often concluded by a peace with an unvanquished party. Such a peace could only be a truce; a suspension of hostilities till one party regained the superiority they had lost;

deceptive treaties were signed, and when the Deputies of the Huguenots insisted on the demolition of certain forts, according to the articles of the treaty, the demand was never refused but only evaded. The Huguenots might learn, that in a treaty, when one party requires the other to do that for them which they cannot do themselves, the compact will be most obstinately violated. The French Cabinet, before Cardinal Richelieu's accession to the fulness of his power, was a miserable junto of intriguing Ministers, solely intent on dislodging each other. The genius of Richelieu alone could at once subdue an indomitable aristocracy, and a whole people of heroes—the Huguenots of France.

But the day of Richelieu's triumph had not yet arrived. The Protestants of France were as formidable as ever.

The sea-port of La Rochelle might be considered as the metropolitan city of the Protestantism of France. It was a town haughty from its independence, for its citizens had never forgotten that a Sovereign of France, Louis the Eleventh, had sworn on his knees never to invade their privileges. It had long formed a Government in France, independent of France; it was a Republic in a Monarchy.

The Catholic had long looked on La Rochelle with horror as the nest of heresy and rebellion; and among the most curious circumstances in the early life of the renowned Cardinal, is, as he has himself told us, that when only a juvenile and obscure Bishop residing in his diocese of Luçon, in the neighbourhood of La Rochelle, among his dreams and vain imaginations, often would his solitary thoughts turn towards that unholy spot, musing on means to reduce it to that obedience which it had long rejected. This reverie of his youth he had cast aside among other chimerical fancies.

The cause of the French Protestants could not be separated from that of civil freedom and political independence; and La Rochelle was to be in France, its cradle or its grave. The independence of the party and the place was so deeply cherished in the minds of the nobles of France, as a balance in the state against the despotic predominance of royal authority, which already appeared in the rising Favourite, that Bassompierre, with his characteristic frankness, revealed the secret thought of his companions, when serving against La Rochelle he sarcastically observed, "We shall be mad enough to take it."

Historians, who have considered La Rochelle merely as the strong hold of the Reformed, and beheld in its terrific siege only a spectacle of sectarian fanaticism, have fallen into a great error. So easy is it to mistake that spirit of political independence, whose devotion is fervid as that of religion, and which can boast of martyrs not less numerous. In the afflicting history of La Rochelle, through all its unparalleled sufferings, the Protestants have only viewed an immolation to the Moloch of Catholicism. Even a great philosopher, in an unguarded moment, once adopted the popular appearance of this memorable scene. It is a curious fact, that Hume, in the first edition of his history, in alluding to the horrors of the siege of La Rochelle, closed with this observation: "Such mighty influence had the religious spirit over that sect, and so much did it overbalance in their breasts every motive of self-preservation, of duty to their friends, and of regard to their native country." This reflection was erased in a subsequent edition. It is probable that, on maturer study, Hume discovered the secret connection between the higher political parties in France and the French Protestants; that the cause of civil freedom was entangled with the cause of the "new religion;" that if they suppressed "every motive of self-preservation," it

was because they well knew that, after four civil wars and continual revolts, there were no longer any terms for the citizens of La Rochelle; and that so far from violating their "duty to their friends, and their regard to their native country," they perished by the inspiration of their patriotism and their honour. Perhaps, too, Hume might have discovered the fact, that in the eventful siege of La Rochelle, all those who would have sacrificed their lives for its preservation were not contained within its walls, for many such might have been found in the ranks of that very army which came to annihilate it. These were not sectaries; they held not the same religious creed; but in the fate of La Rochelle, they contemplated the fall of political freedom in France.

What I have here noticed may also serve to throw light on a curious circumstance which Lord John Russell has ingeniously pointed out, and urged as an argument in favour of toleration.* His lordship observed as one of the beneficial effects of toleration, that Nonconformists, in the course of time, moderate their objections, and reconcile themselves to the spirit of the society among which they live. Time weakens their particular notions, till

* I am now writing from the recollection of a newspaper report in the Times of the 19th March, 1828.

they are gradually melted down into the customs and feelings of the nation. This very argument of his lordship's, the Marquis d'Effiat used to our James the First, as an inducement to grant a toleration to the Catholics of England. The French ambassador asserted, that since Henry the Fourth had granted a toleration to the Protestants, more had gradually reverted to Catholicism than in the times of persecution. His lordship connected with the present another observation, that the Protestants who were finally expelled from France in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, were of a different class to their predecessors—inferior in the ranks of society, and judging by their prophets of the Cevennes, we may infer that there were many fanatics among these French Protestants. The fact is probable; and I would thus explain this historical phenomenon. The earlier Protestants counted in their ranks many princes, dukes, and other seigneurs; but when the Government had quelled the intrigues of these ambitious politicians, the descendants of these men of elevated rank, gradually dropped their Protestantism, which most of their fathers had used as a political engine, and conformed to customs which had long become

familiar, and personal interests which instigated their hopes or their pride. It was then that French Protestantism sunk among the more conscientious and the more humble classes of society, who were religious without policy, and martyrs without being politicians.

A secret correspondence with the citizens of La Rochelle had been opened with England. Already Soubise had assumed the novel style of "Admiral of the Churches," on the coast of Saintonge, Aunis, Poitou, and Bretagne. Soubise, accompanied by Saint-Blancard, the confidential friend of his brother, had passed over into England, as deputies or agents for the Rochellers, and though they were not yet publicly received at our Court, the repeated complaints of the French ambassadors prove, that the secret intercourse must have been uninterrupted.

Vast plans of ambition were opened in the bold sketches of these French princes, not ill-adapted to dazzle the eyes of a young monarch and a young minister. One of the reveries of the Duke of Rohan was to form federative republics in France; to create independent Protestant States between the Loire and the Garonne. The English were to in-

vade France, at three different points. They found that a single one proved fatal. Mr. Montague was negociating with the Duke of Savoy, the Duke of Lorraine, and the Duke of Rohan. Richelieu suffered the youthful statesman to mature his negociations, till the Cardinal contrived to lodge him in the Bastille. When his Eminence had digested at leisure all these ingenious schemes, which let him into the secret designs of the enemies of France, he had obtained all the good he could by the imprisonment of the young diplomatist, and raised no objection, on the intercession of our Henrietta, to restore the baffled envoy for some happier mission. Soubise charmed the imagination of the English minister, with the prospective view of the fleet and army of England appearing before La Rochelle,—Rochelle herself opening her gates, Rohan raising his standard, and a hundred thousand Huguenots flying to arms, to greet the deliverer of the Protestants in the person of Buckingham. Such are the visions by which clandestine suppliants enchant our ministers, when our ministers are sanguine and determined!

The expedition to Cadiz, though it had performed no exploit, was, however, in some

respect beneficial, as Buckingham told the Parliament; for this demonstration of our national energy had not only struck a terror into Spain, and, by intercepting her trade, had prevented supplies being sent to her army in Flanders, but employed her in fortifying her coast. It had, however, considerably alarmed Richelieu, and that great minister, with his statesman-like sagacity, foresaw the danger of its direction against France, and we are positively assured, that he prognosticated that one day our fleet would be seen before La Rochelle.* This is not improbable. The reverie of his ambitious youth was still hovering in his brain, and the minister wanted no evidence of the secret communications of the parties.

Richelieu anticipated these projects. Conscious of the miserable state of the marine of France, an inferior genius might have exhaled his despair in some solitary Jeremiad, but Richelieu, once resolved, never quitted his object, till it became his own. He laboured day and night; he made every public and even private sacrifice to encounter a naval enemy. He hastened an alliance with Spain, whose interests were adverse to those of France, and

* Père Griffet, Histoire de France, xiii. 537.

whose friendship was incompatible with his remoter designs, that he might combine with her fleet to attack Ireland and England; but he soon discovered that the Spaniards were not in earnest, and were not less desirous than the English to witness the success of the French Huguenots.* Still the vigilant minister of France preceded his enemy's movements. Toiras, who commanded at La Rochelle, was warned for preparation, and the Isle of Rhé had been for some time strengthened in its fortifications.

Buckingham, who had now felt the capriciousness of popularity, imagined that it might be as easily regained as it had been easily lost. A chivalric adventure would restore to him that favour which, at this moment, might have been denied to all the wisdom, all the policy, and all the arts of an experienced statesman. Unquestionably his imagination had been kindled by the flatteries and by the promises of Soubise and Saint-Blancard; and in the eagerness of his hopes, he declared, that "before midsummer he should be more honoured and beloved of the Commons than ever was the Earl of Essex,"† the romantic hero and

* Père Griffet, xiii. 555.

† I learn this from a manuscript letter.

favourite of Queen Elizabeth. In such cradled fancies he rocked his own and his master's imagination.

A fleet and an army, sufficiently formidable to assure the Rochellers of their security, were now collected, and the Lord Duke, anticipating a conquest by their open reception, went to war as if he had been hastening to a tournament. "Buckingham," says De Brienne, "appeared in this expedition with the equipage of an amorous knight, rather than the equipage of a general." Splendour, however, not effeminacy, characterised the romantic warrior; for he afterwards honourably vouched his words by his deeds.

The preparations for his departure attracted the public eye. Even his provisions, his stalls for oxen, and his coops for poultry, and the beautiful horses, richly caparisoned, presented by his friends, seemed "as strange and exceeding," as the magnificent train of his trumpeters, and the bands of his musicians, in yachts lined with crimson velvet, playing their melodies to the rough waves. They saw even his coach and litter shipped, and it was rumoured that he had taken his jewels. Our Lord High Admiral and General had made himself ready to attend either a ball or a siege,

which ever the Rochellers might prefer. It was an armament not solely devoted to the Graces; for there were armories and arms, and the most able military and naval officers were selected for the occasion. The destination of the fleet and troops was not known, but Soubise had been seen in the King's coach.

This expedition at length appeared before Rochelle; but Buckingham, who had too long listened to the vague hopes of the two Frenchmen, was surprised that he had to force a landing, that troops came down to oppose him, and that the Rochellers neither advanced nor communicated. The town, in fact, was divided between two opposed parties; those who indulged the hope of peace with their Sovereign, hesitated to join the English, lest they should irrecoverably forfeit his favour; the uncompromising Calvinists, who preferred death to submission, were for opening their gates to their potent ally. Amidst this conflict of irresolute prudence and obstinate revolt, the aged Duchess of Rohan, in her ninetieth year, stole to one of the gates, and having collected some scattered friends, pleaded for the admission of her son, Soubise, and his companions. Accompanied by the Secretary of Buckingham, Sir William

Beecher, these chiefs of the Huguenots harangued their own party, and Saint-Blancard was dispatched to the English fleet to assure Buckingham that the town would shortly declare itself. Meanwhile, they returned their thanks, and left their new ally to combat alone.

The English left behind them the Fort of St. Prie, called by Rushworth "the meadow-castle," which must have surrendered on the first summons. They might have taken possession of the fertile Isle of Oleron, but though this had been agreed on, Buckingham changed his descent for the rocky Isle of Rhé, where they made good their landing, after a sharp resistance, gallantly driving the French before them to their strong hold.

Four months afterwards, when the active enemy, landing from the French coast, poured down from both these neglected quarters, the military blunder was detected, of having passed by the forts, and the isle, of which possession might have been easily obtained.

The Rochellers remained immovable, and the English were stopped in the Isle of Rhé by the formidable citadel of St. Martin, which had been not unprepared to receive them. Entrenching themselves, they sat down before this impregnable citadel, which could only be

forced to surrender by a blockade at sea, and a tedious siege at land.

Buckingham, unwearied in his ardent duties, at least had resolved by his zeal to discover, as Charles the First said, "his proficiency in the trade which he so happily began." He failed not to be in every part of the camp, he was in the trenches, he inspected the batteries, he observed where the shot lighted on the enemy, and was present in the most imminent dangers, unsparing of his person more than befitted a Commander-in-Chief. His life was attempted by an assassin, a fanatical Catholic, whose knife, of a peculiar construction, was found slung in his sleeve. Its singular construction attracted notice, and it was engraved in a published narrative at London; but the Lord-general was not doomed to be struck by this French Felton. The intrepidity of Buckingham was not exceeded by any of the heroes of Plutarch. It was said, what one is unwilling to believe, that the assassin was instigated by Toiras, but the conduct of Buckingham towards that Governor seems to exculpate the Frenchman from such a violation of legitimate warfare.

With Buckingham, it seemed a war of courtesy and magnificence. When Toiras sent a

trumpet to request a passport to convey some wounded officers to the coast, Buckingham sent them his grand chaloupe, or yacht, furnished with every elegant convenience, and lined with *très belle escarlette rouge;* while his musicians, with all the varieties of their instruments, solaced and charmed the wounded enemy in crossing the arm of the sea. Toiras, next day, expressed his grateful sense, by sending back five English soldiers, who had just been taken.

In a private letter of the times, it is mentioned, "That my Lord Duke being offered a thousand pounds for one of the dead bodies (there were thirty Marquises, Earls, and Barons, reported to have perished), he nobly refused the money, and offered his own waggons to carry back the bodies, taking especial care of those who are hurt amongst his prisoners." Buckingham addressed a letter to Toiras, where he said, "That every person of merit would always be treated by him with the courtesy which is their due, and he hoped that hitherto he had shown himself not more negligent in this respect than the laws of war allow; but if affairs should compel him to adopt other modes of conduct, he exhorted Toiras to consider his own necessities, which indeed he had endured with heroic patience. If his courage still led

him to form vain hopes of relief, it might prejudice his safety, which would be avoided by accepting the most honourable conditions."

Toiras was not deficient in the same style—"The courtesies of the Duke of Buckingham are known to all the world, and as they are bestowed with judgment they can only be truly valued by those who merit them. I know of no greater merit in a man than to devote his life in the service of his King. Many brave men here are of the same opinion, and they would be ill-satisfied with themselves if they could not overcome any difficulties whatever. I should be unworthy of your favour, were I to omit a single point of my duties. It is yourself, Sir, who will contribute to my glory, whatever may be the issue."

These letters were afterwards followed by an intercourse of civilities. Even in little matters the same attentions delighted. Toiras once inquiring, "Whether they had saved any melons in the island?" was the next day presented, in the Duke's name, with a dozen. The bearer received twenty golden crowns, and Toiras dispatching six bottles of orange-flower water, and a dozen jars of cypress powder, the Duke presented the bearer with twenty jacobuses. After a sharp action, when Toiras sent one of his pages, with a trumpet, to request leave to bury

some noblemen, the Duke received the messenger with terms of condolence.

But amidst this profusion of mutual civilities, perhaps more crafty on one side than the other, neither party was less intent on fighting. At London, however, this intercourse of civilities and messengers, it was reported, gave the enemy an opportunity of seeing the works and the army. Many inauspicious rumours were bruited among the people, "and some of higher rank gave out that nothing could go well at the Isle of Rhé; that there must be a Parliament, some must be sacrificed, and Bishop Laud was as like as any." Laud, who was easily alarmed, repeated these rumours to Charles, who desired, that "he would not trouble himself with reports, till Laud saw him forsake his friends." Thus early was threatened the sacrifice of Laud; but the connecting his name with a military expedition, is an evidence from what party it proceeded. A French song at Paris bore for its burden, that if the Duke of Buckingham could not take the citadel at Rhé, he would succeed in taking the Tower of London.

Buckingham and Toiras, in truth, were both looking for reinforcements: Buckingham had been disappointed in his reception by the Rochellers, and his inactivity may be fairly attri-

buted to his difficult position. He was anxiously waiting for the Earl of Holland, who, when he was ready at Plymouth to embark, found that the ships were provisioning at Chatham. When the provisions were shipped, it was some time before they could get the men to a rendezvous; and when the fleet was ready to sail, the winds proved contrary. Charles, in a letter to Buckingham, laments the slowness of the promised supplies. "Now we know how to prevent those faults which we, without some experience, could hardly foresee." A young monarch, and a nation long unaccustomed to military enterprise, knew little of the cares, the disappointments, and the management of a large expedition, which depend so much on the "commissioners," as Charles denominates them; who, he adds, are "subject to such slow proceedings." We were then but in the infancy of war and glory, and we suffered in the weakness of that condition.

Toiras, on his side, was reduced to misery. His provisions had alarmingly diminished, and he could hold no communication with the French army on the coast. In despair, how to convey a dispatch to the camp, three soldiers offered their lives to be the bearers, by swimming through the English fleet, and far across

the ocean to the distant land. The dispatch, in cypher, thickly coated with wax and inclosed in a tin-case, was fastened to the necks of these patriotic Leanders. One soldier sunk, another exhausted was shot by the English, the third, discovered at a distance, was pursued by an English cutter. To escape from them he dexterously floated and dipped in two opposite currents; occasionally raising his head from beneath the waters to respire, he would again bury himself in the ocean. The English perceiving an object which was continually disappearing, imagined it to be a fish, and gave up the idle chase. A storm arose, and as he could no longer swim, the messenger in despair cast himself upon the waves, till the waves at length threw him on the shore. There he lay exhausted, having lost all power of standing; he was found crawling on his hands and feet covered with blood, which he declared to have been occasioned by the frequent bites of fish, which had pursued him during half a league in this remarkable passage.*

I shall preserve one of those inexhaustible ex-

* This great swimmer, who swam for his country's good, became the theme of poets, and received a pension secured by the Salt-tax of the province where he landed. *Mercure*, xiii. 857.

pedients, by which the universal capacity of the Cardinal enabled him to overcome difficulties in matters which did not seem to come under his cognizance.

The victualling of the citadel of St. Martin, which was blockaded on the sea-side, became every hour more urgent. It was deemed impossible to convey supplies in the face of a fleet of a hundred sail. At this moment Richelieu recollecting a chance conversation in which he had heard of certain skiffs which the peasants of Bayonne and Juan de Luz, in carrying their provisions to market, dexterously run through the narrowest channels, using at once *oars and sails*, he instantly ordered from Spain some of these light pinnaces, which floated like cork.

One night the sea-watch struck up an alarm; a light and shadowy fleet was suddenly seen gliding among the thickest of our ships. Buckingham himself started out to sea, and commanded to set them on fire. He was ill-supported. He took their admiral, but a great part got into the citadel: the others, dispersed, returned to Oleron. The provisions which these skiffs conveyed, though but small, diffused joy and confidence through the famished garrison, who, in the morning, held out in triumph, on their pike-heads, the mutton and

turkeys. Their provisions would not have lasted two days,—they were now safe for a month. On this minute incident, perhaps the fate of this expedition turned. Our soldiers and seamen were weary, wasted, and discontented. The vintage is an auxiliary to an invaded country; half the army were nearly perishing by their immoderate eating of grapes; they expected to return home in a few days; and now the fresh supply which they had witnessed, announced that the siege would still be long. A sudden and great change was observed among the English, their confidence sunk into despair, they no longer thought on victory, but on retreat. "It could not be fear, but it was very like it," observed a letter-writer from our camp. The uxorious talked of their wives, and those who were tired of their salt meats, of the Christmas beef they should eat by their firesides: all dreaded the hard duties of a winter in the face of an enemy invulnerable as the stony ground they were daily treading. Buckingham was often assailed in plain language, both by officers and men. Four months were elapsing: the reinforcements were still delayed. Soubise's party, though they had raised their standard at Rochelle, rather required protection than afforded aid. It was

evident that preparations were making to embark. Batteries were dismantled, cannon were shipped. At this moment dispatches from the Earl of Holland announced that he was on the point of setting sail; and Soubise, accompanied by the deputies of La Rochelle, on their knees were imploring that the Duke would not abandon them, promising every sort of aid, far beyond their ability to perform. At this moment Buckingham was irresolute, and scarcely knew what to decide on. He had already lost some of his best officers, particularly Sir John Burroughs, and Saint Blancard, a leader of great spirit and ability, far superior to Soubise,* and he had now resolved to retire. The

* The character of Saint Blancard indicates the temper of the party of the resolute Rochellers, from the mayor to the humblest inhabitant, after they had declared themselves. That conflict terminated with one of the most dreadful sieges of famine and death recorded by history.

The Duke of Rohan, in his Memoirs, in lamenting the death of this young man, his confidential friend, describes him as one equally remarkable for his piety, his courage, and the solid qualities of his mind. Père Griffet, who, though a Jesuit, has written history with impartiality, tells us, that he was one of the most determined Calvinists in the whole kingdom. He had sold his estates to live in a foreign country, that, as he said, he might have nothing more to lose in France, and only return to make war as often as he could, to live at the expense of the King.

French had been for several days past landing detachments at the fort of St. Prie. The adventurer Soubise and his small body of partisans, in despair, urged that a general assault should be made on the strong fort of St. Martin. It was to satisfy the Rochellers, and to evince how earnestly England had fathered their cause, that Buckingham consented to this desperate movement; he was not sanguine of the result,—for just before it took place, a passport being requested for three wounded officers, he declared that "the sick and the healthy would soon have a free passage, having resolved to quit the island." The English were seen in motion. Toiras armed himself with his cuirass at the break of day, which was not his usual custom, and it announced to the garrison what he expected. The English bravely mounted the walls, but were so warmly received that they made but one step from the top of their scaling-ladders to the bottom, as the *Mercure* reports. Another point of attack at a bastion was not more fortunate. After a combat of full two hours, the English were beaten off, with the loss of several hundred men in that assault. On the succeeding day Buckingham sent a message to Toiras, to bid him a farewell, and to assure him that he was hastening to embark,

that Toiras, whose valour and patience he admired, might have the entire honour of his retreat unshared by others.

It is positively asserted, that Buckingham designed to have shipped his troops that day, when his evil genius in Soubise again implored only for the suspension of a single day, that they might remove in security all the corn in the island of La Rochelle.

This was on a Sunday, and it was in the night of this very day that Marshal Schomberg advanced with six thousand infantry and some cavalry, and early in the morning of Monday suddenly appeared in view of the citadel. Toiras hastened to the French army, and a council of war was immediately held whether they should allow the English to reimbark without attacking them? There are always two opinions respecting the attack of a retreating enemy. Toiras, now the active general, and no longer the courteous correspondent, decided for immediate combat; the honour of France required that the English should be chased from their shores. On the other side, Marillac, Marechal-de-camp, was averse to risk the flower of the King's army; were the English reduced to despair, they might become formidable. He reminded them

of the battle of Poitiers, and offered a more recent instance, when at the siege of Amiens the late King (Henry IV.) was satisfied to retake the city, but suffered the Spaniards to depart, without risking an unnecessary battle, though certain of victory; and according to the proverb, the Marechal-de-camp cautiously reminded them, to a retiring enemy we should offer a golden bridge. There were others who were for suffering the English to retreat without pursuit, but the French officers were in general inflamed with military ardour. They ridiculed the timid prudence of the Marechal-de-camp, and from that hour Marillac was nicknamed "the golden bridge."

The English were retiring, slowly marching in good order. They had first to cross a wide plain of more than half a league. It was here that the French came down in considerable numbers. Buckingham drew up in line, several times offering battle. It was refused by the enemy. They were more certain of their prey by its pursuit. This retreat may be paralleled with that of Corunna in the late war. The retreat was covered by the cavalry. To reach the ships the English had to pass over a narrow causeway among the marshes and salt-pits, thence to cross a wooden bridge which

Buckingham had erected for that purpose, to collect together on a small island. Part of the army had passed over the bridge, but on the causeway the destruction began. Charged furiously by the French, the cavalry disordered the infantry. Our own horse rode over our own men, and no man could find his officer. The van was unconscious of what was passing in the rear; no one seemed to know what had happened, or what he was to do. In the rush and flight of that *déroute*, less fell by the sword than were buried in the marshes and drowned in the river. We lost our men and our standards, but hardly our honour. Buckingham, sword in hand, attempted in vain to rally his scattered troops; the enemy was content to see us perish. They could not, however, force a passage over the wooden bridge, where, though the English had neglected to erect some defensive works, they faced about, and maintained that post by their firmness and courage till the remains of the army had re-embarked. The last person seen on the beach was the unhappy General. He departed, but not without a promise to the Rochellers, that he would again come to their relief. So firm at least was his dauntless spirit, and we know that the promise was a solemn pledge.

This, like all similar expeditions, was oppositely discussed at home. Historians have echoed the condemnation of Buckingham for the faults committed at the Isle of Rhé; and had the Duke enjoyed the advantages of historians who write after the fatal results, he might have agreed with their opinions, he might have heard of certain matters which perhaps had never reached him, and he possibly might have informed the historians of others which they knew nothing about.

What, however, has not been noticed, even by the later writers of history, is an admirably written dispatch from Buckingham to Lord Conway, by which we learn that he foresaw the possible dangers which afterwards were so fatally realized. Alluding to the fleet, he says, "All our shipping is so dispersed round about the island, that unless some fatality happens, which cannot yet be foreseen, no considerable force can come to them." The unforeseen fatality happened! He was aware of the possible result of Cardinal Richelieu's preparations of "the shipping preparing at various places, which once joined, would make such a strength, as if they did not endanger us by sea, yet would they so divert our forces, now scattered about the island, as we must of necessity ga-

ther our fleet into one body, and so leave the other places naked for the enemy to come in with succours, which he would not fail to have in a readiness to put over on such an occasion." In this observation, Buckingham discovers the prescience of a military mind, for thus it was that the affair terminated. His description of the sort of soldiers he had to encounter, and their commander, is an evidence of his diligent information and lively judgment. "They are strong in number, both of horse and foot, their horse consisting most of gentlemen,—and their foot, of the regiment of Champagne, which in this kingdom is called the "Invincible." He hits off at a single stroke, "The governor (Toiras) who had made the preservation of the citadel, the scale of his honour and fortune, out of which, having the Queen-Mother and Cardinal for enemies, he will find no safety; so that before he will yield up the place he will make it his death-bed,—and if he cannot live, surely he will die for it." Such is the dispatch, which none but Buckingham could have written; and when we compare this letter, dated "from the camp in July," with the catastrophe of the expedition in November, it will prove that the real Buckingham is a

very different individual from the fictitious Buckingham in our history, that rash and hare-brained creation of whom Hume says, and others will repeat, "all his military operations showed equal incapacity and inexperience." The writer of this energetic letter could never be condemned for "incapacity," and Buckingham never displayed more sedate thought than in this enterprise.*

The Duke in his defence asserted, that he had always consulted his council of war, and that he had been ill-supported on various occasions. Some officers on their return from this expedition, which, after all, was only disastrous in the fatal march to the ships, pleaded in favour of the council of war. The veteran officer of the highest reputation was Sir John Burroughs, who was unfortunately shot in reconnoitring the enemy. Gerbier assures us that this officer was in the closest confidence of Buckingham; but he also tells us that "the Duke would have taken the fort, making use of their present fear, and the heat of his own men, if Colonel Burroughs, having the re-

* The curious inquirer may consult this letter in Lord Hardwick's Collection. Vol. II.

putation of the elder and more experienced soldier, had not crossed his more wise and gallant resolution." *

It sometimes happens,—as in our late war, after the battle of Vimeira, where the pursuit of the enemy might have closed in the capture of Lisbon, and not in the nullifying Convention of Cintra,—that old officers act more prudently than happily, and the fortunate audacity of Buckingham might have been more wise at the moment than the caution of the veteran. In the game of war is there to be no venture? On the other hand, I find another witness of a very opposite character to Gerbier. The patriot, Dr. Turner, member for Shrewsbury, alluding to the death of Sir John Burroughs, said: "The man for whom I wear this black riband counselled the Duke, at his very first sight of the fort, that he should never put spade into the ground, but embark, and undertake some other design." † This confirms Gerbier's account, that Sir John Burroughs "crossed" the Duke's resolution. I can give no opinion on the other part, whether it were "more wise and gallant."

If Buckingham had possessed the skill of the

* Sloane MSS. 4181. † Harl. MSS. 383. Letter 435.

great Duke of our days, as well as the intrepidity, which he certainly did possess, we should not hesitate to censure the veteran adviser. War, like Love, has its moment for capture, which may never return.*

Soubise does not appear to have afforded Buckingham any other advice than the most fatal one which could have been adopted, and, in truth, Soubise was an unworthy brother of the illustrious Duke of Rohan. He was an adventurer, who, having possessed himself one night, by a surprise or stratagem, of a French man-of-war and some smaller craft, set himself up as "Admiral of the Churches," and roamed

* Observe how unfortunate heroes are condemned by their later historians. Hume has said of Buckingham, assuming all that he found in Rushworth to contain "all the truth, and nothing but the truth," that, "having landed his men, though with some loss, he *followed not the blow*, but allowed Toiras, the French governor, five days' respite." The reader now learns, for the first time, by Gerbier, that the Duke would have *followed the blow*;" and from Dr. Turner, that the veteran officer, whose opinion was the oracle, entertained a very opposite notion of "following the blow" than Sir Balthazar Gerbier and our Philosopher, who was melodizing his pages on a sofa. Smollett echoed the opinion of Hume; but when history is to be composed by the sheet, in weekly numbers, the animated writer can have no time to scrutinize into opinions and statements. The first, which is usually the popular one, is always the best for sixpence!

the seas as a corsair. That he was deficient in physical courage,—at any rate one of the great essentials of military character,—appears from various facts. He was sick in the assault, and sane in the retreat. So far from distinguishing himself in action, he was present only in one, where he stood aloof, and was the first to fly. Soubise's courage was the jest of the French Court. On his flight from the action alluded to, it was observed, that if he continued this mode of combat, he would probably be the oldest general in Europe. When Buckingham made his descent on the Isle of Rhé, the filial Soubise set off to visit his mother at La Rochelle; on which Monsieur observed, that he acted in conformity to the commandment, *Honora Patrem et Matrem*, so doubtless his days would be prolonged for him.

Thus, while it was the evil chance of Buckingham to listen to the counsels and to embrace the views of this adventurer and partisan, the luckless Admiral and General was to encounter the invincibility of Toiras, the French commander; while it may be said that the more awful genius of the Cardinal met Buckingham at the Isle of Rhé. It is a fact worthy of record, that such were the foresight and preventions which Richelieu had taken for the defence of La Rochelle and

its neighbouring islands, that the discomfiture of the English was not so much ascribed to the firm and intrepid resistance of Toiras, the commander, as to the sagacity and wisdom of the Minister. "I do not deny," said the Keeper of the Seals to Toiras, "that you have served well and defended your Island; but what have you done more than five hundred gentlemen in France would have done in your place?" Toiras bitterly replied: "It would, indeed, be unfortunate were there not more than five hundred men who knew their duty as well as myself: I have done it, but there are in this kingdom also more than five thousand as able to hold the seals as yourself." The Keeper of the Seals had published an account of the siege of the citadel of St. Martin, in which he had highly extolled the Cardinal de Richelieu and little Le Sieur de Toiras. "To what end," adds the sensible Père Griffet, "would all the cares of the Cardinal have tended, had Toiras been less obstinate in his defence with a courage, a patience, and a firmness of which we have few examples?" In history this is not a singular instance of men of the Cabinet valuing their own services above those which they possibly conceive to be less intellectual.

What were the feelings of Charles the First

on this trying occasion—this second baffled expedition? Awaking from the dreams of Monsieur Soubise and Saint Blancard, he saw his unhappy friend, who he well knew was devoting his life to secure his master's power and his nation's glory, returning with obloquy to encounter fiercer enemies at home than those who had chased him from their shores. With Charles, nothing could shake the strength of his tenderness, and the fulness of his confidence. His agitated spirit could only deeply sympathise with the misfortunes of his friend, and regret that he had not lightened these griefs by a nearer participation of them. The monarch still flatters his discomfited general with honour and reputation, and still leaves to him the brilliant hope of some new design, or the consolation of returning to his sovereign in the entireness of his affections.

All this appears by a letter which Charles the First had dispatched to Buckingham during his uncertain return, at a moment when the last retreat from Rhé had been resolved on, but had not yet occurred. That letter, which the King was not sure would reach its destination, came to Buckingham on his first landing in England. I have transcribed it from the original preserved in the great treasury of our na-

tional manuscripts. It is an overflowing effusion of friendship from the heart of a monarch. We feel the hurried and the deep emotions in every sentence.

STEENIE,

I pray God that this letter be useless, or never come to your hands, this being only to meet you at your landing in England, in case you should come from Rhé, without perfecting your work, happily begun, but, I must confess with grief, ill seconded. A letter you sent to Jack Epslie is the cause of this, wherein ye have taught me prudence, and how to seek the next best in misfortunes. This is, therefore, to give you power, in case ye should imagine that ye have not enough already, to put in execution any of those designs* ye mentioned to Jack Epslie, or any other that you shall like of, so that I leave it freely to your will, whether after your landing in England ye will set forth again to some design before you come hither; or else that ye will first come to ask my advice before ye undertake a new work, assuring you that, with whatsomever success ye shall come to me, ye shall be ever welcome; one of my great-

* One was an attack on Calais; the Duke of Rohan had pointed out several others.

est griefs being that I have not been with you in this time of suffering, for I know we should have much eased each other's griefs. I cannot stay longer on this subject for fear of losing myself in it. To conclude, ye cannot come so soon as ye are welcome, and unfeignedly in my mind ye have gained as much reputation with wise and honest men in this action, as if ye had performed all your desires. I have no more to say this time, but to conjure thee, for my sake, to have a care of your health, for every day I find new reasons to confirm me in being your loving, faithful friend,

CHARLES R.*

Whitehall, 6 Nov. 1627.

* Harleian MSS. 6988 (30).

CHAPTER III.

STATE OF AFFAIRS AFTER THE FAILURE OF THE EXPEDITION TO LA ROCHELLE.

BUCKINGHAM was received by his royal master with all the sympathy of a common affliction—his own spirit was still undismayed, and still intent on some future triumph. But he had returned to witness the miseries of his calamitous retreat in the griefs of domestic privacy. There were few families who had not to mourn a father, a husband, or a brother. Some of our officers appear never to have overcome their utter dejection at the recollection of the last scene they had quitted. Sir Henry Sprey, one of the commanders, when his lady, joyfully embracing him, asked him how he did? answered, "Though I am returned safe, yet my heart is broken"—and telling over the names of those slain in his sight, many of whom had determined to sacrifice themselves, to avoid the imputation of cowardice, with which they

had been reproached by the Duke's party, men far superior to himself, he modestly added, "and he cared not to outlive the memory." His death, which shortly after happened, was believed to have been hastened by grief.

The public talk was disturbed by daily rumours. They reproached the pride of the Lord Duke, that seemed as if he had scorned to retreat; and ascribed the cause of the disaster to an over-daring delay in marching, that the English might not seem to fly; otherwise the army might have been out of danger before the French could have overtaken them, and more than two thousand brave men had not been slaughtered in a short passage. The clergy were prohibited alluding to the dismal expedition; an Oxford man, who preached at the cross, had his sermon castrated before it was delivered. The King's physician was committed, for contradicting the Duke on the number lost, and a lady, for calling the Isle of *Rhé*, the Isle of *Rue*.

The spirit of the people had been at first elated by the promise of some splendid enterprise, and the more active spirits of the times, who had so long been crying out upon the dull and sleepy time of peace, and had so often dinned the ears of James the First, how the

country was dishonoured, and religion endangered, while the Palatinate was lost, were now incurring all "the pains and penalties" of war, and of unsuccessful war. Their wits and their murmurs now ran as fast on the other side. Since the war, all trading was dead, their wools lie on their hands, men were without work, and our ships were rotting in our ports, to be sold as cheap as fire-wood. Besides, if the wars continued, more forced loans must supply the Lord Duke's prodigality, which was the same either in peace or in war, in his banquets or his campaigns.

The King was now involved in a more intricate and desperate condition; the nation was thrown into a state of agitation, of which the page of our popular history yields but a faint impression. The spirit of insurrection was stalking forth. The imprisonment of the Loan Recusants had alarmed their counties, and a mutiny of the soldiery and the mariners was terrifying the metropolis. It was an unarmed rebellion.

An army and a navy had returned unpaid and sore with defeat. In the country, the farmer was pillaged, and few could resort to church, lest in their absence their houses should be rifled. London was scoured by seamen and

soldiers, roving even into the palace of the Sovereign. Soldiers, without pay, form a society without laws. A band of captains rushed into the Duke's apartment as he sat at dinner, and when reminded by the Duke of a late proclamation, forbidding all soldiers coming to Court in troops on pain of hanging, they answered that "whole companies were ready to be hanged with them, that the King might do as he pleased with their lives, for that their reputation was lost, and their honour forfeited for want of their salary to pay their debts." When a petition was once presented, and it was inquired who was the composer of it, a vast body tremendously shouted "All, all!" A mob of seamen met at Tower-hill, and set a lad on a scaffold, who with an "O yes!" proclaimed that "King Charles had promised their pay, or the Duke had been on the scaffold himself." It is said that thirty thousand pounds would have quieted these disorganized bodies, but the Exchequer could not apply so mean a sum. These, at least, were grievances more apparent to the Sovereign than those vague ones so incessantly reiterated by his querulous Commons. There remained only a choice of difficulties between the disorder and the remedy. At the moment the Lord High Ad-

miral got up what he called "The Council of the Sea," and was punctual at the first meeting, but afterwards was always engaged on other affairs; and "the Council of the Sea" turned out to be one of those shadowy expedients which only lasts while it acts on the imagination.

A general spirit of insurrection, rather than insurrection itself, had suddenly raised some strange appearances throughout the kingdom. "The remonstrance" of the late Parliament, unquestionably, had quickened the feelings of the people, but more concealed causes may be suspected to have been working. Many of the heads of the opposition were busied in secret confederacy, a mode of conduct which was afterwards adopted with great success. About this time I find many mysterious tales,—indications of secret associations, and other evidence of the intrigues and the machinations of the popular party, who became now more active as the distresses of the Government became more complicate and desperate.

We may conceive the disordered state of the administration, from some secret histories which have been preserved in the private correspondence of the times. When the King was urging the general loan, and committing the Loan-

Recusants, which raised such a ferment in the country, a rumour ran, that the King was to be visited by an ambassador from "the President of the Society of the Rosy-cross." He was, indeed, an heteroclite ambassador, for he is described "as a youth with never a hair on his face," in fact, a child, who was to conceal the mysterious personage which he was for a moment to represent. He appointed Sunday afternoon to come to Court attended by thirteen coaches. If the King accepted his advice, he was to proffer three millions to fill His Majesty's coffers, but his secret councils were to unfold matters of moment and secrecy. A letter in Latin was delivered to "David Ramsey of the Clock," to hand over to the King. A copy of it has been preserved in a letter of the times, but it is so unintelligible, that it could have had no effect on Charles, who, however, declared, that he would not admit this ambassador to an audience, and that if His Majesty could tell where "the President of the Rosy-cross" was to be found, unless he made good his offer, he should be hanged at the Court-gates. This served the town and country for talk, till the appointed Sunday had passed over, and no ambassador was visible! Some considered this as the plotting of crazy brains,

but others imagined it to be an attempt to speak with the King in private on matters respecting the Duke.

When the Parliament was sitting, a sealed letter was thrown under the door with this superscription, *Cursed be the man that finds this letter and delivers it not to the House of Commons.* The Serjeant-at-Arms handed it to the Speaker, who would not open it till the House had chosen a committee of twelve members to inform them whether it was fit to be read. Sir Edward Coke, after having read two or three lines, stopped, and according to my authority "durst read no further, but immediately sealing it, the committee thought fit to send it to the King, who, they say, on reading it through, cast it into the fire, and sent the House of Commons thanks for their wisdom in not publishing it, and for the discretion of the committee in so far tendering his honour, as not to read it out, when they once perceived that it touched His Majesty." *

* I deliver this fact as I find it in a private letter; it is, however, noticed in the journals of the House of Commons, 23 Junii, 4. Caroli Regis: "Sir Edward Coke reporteth that they find that, enclosed in the letter, to be unfit for any subject's ear to hear. Read but one line and a half of it, and could not endure to read more of it. It was ordered to

Others, besides the freedom of speech in the House, which they justly insisted on, introduced another form, of "A speech without doors," which was distributed to the Members. We are glad to possess it, for it exhibits the popular grievances, with tolerable impartiality —without any deficient terror of "him who hath the Prince's ear open to hearken to his inchanting tongue."*

Some in office employed proceedings equally extraordinary. An intercepted letter, written by the Archduchess to the King of Spain, was delivered by Sir Henry Martin at the Council-board on New-year's day, who found it in some papers relating to the navy. The Duke imme-

be sealed and delivered to the King's hands by eight members, and to acquaint his Majesty with the place and time of finding it, particularly that upon the reading of *one line and a half*, they would read no more, but sealed it up, and brought it to the House." That *one line and a half* should contain such infamous matter, as is reported "unfit for any subject's ear," may excite surprise. It must either have been some horrid charge accusing the King of his father's death, which the malignant spirits of the times dared to insinuate, or *the line and a half* must have contained some intolerable appellations of the unfortunate monarch by one of that party, which at length laid his head on the block.

* This Speech without doors occupies ten folio pages of Rushworth, i. 489.

diately said he would take it to the King; and, accompanied by several Lords, went into his Majesty's closet. The letter, written in French, advised the Spanish Court to make a sudden war with England for various reasons. First, his Majesty's want of skill to govern of himself; secondly, the weakness of his council in not daring to acquaint him with the truth; want of money; disunion of the subjects' hearts from their Prince, &c. &c. The King only observed, that the writer forgot that the Archduchess writes to the King of Spain in Spanish, and sends her letters overland.

These minute facts exhibit an extraordinary state of the public mind, and the feebleness of the Government which had made itself liable to experience this disaffection, and to endure this contempt and these public reproaches. At such a moment, Buckingham, in despair at the popular prejudices "growing with their growth," was busily planning a fresh expedition to relieve the Rochellers, who were hard besieged by their Sovereign.

The deputies of La Rochelle, with Soubise, as early as in January, were urging the hastening of the promised expedition for the relief of the besieged. Charles could not overcome his repugnance to try a third Parliament; he still

hoped to provide for his army and navy by levying his usual contributions. They were moderate, but in the present temper of the nation they were intolerable. There was a race of divines, whom a member of the House, in the preceding King's time, had severely characterized as "spaniels to the Court, and wolves to the people." The pulpits were resounding the most slavish tenets, and proclaiming as rebellious those who refused their aid to Government. One of these had dared to avow in his Lent sermon, that "all we have is the King's by divine right." The sermon was published, and the sermonizer's house was immediately burnt down!

Many of the divines more learned than this hardy theological adventurer, were searching for ancient precedents to maintain absolute monarchy, and inculcate passive obedience; nor were there wanting lawyers to allege precedents for raising supplies in the manner which Charles had adopted. At this moment the King vacillated between his urgent wants, and his legal rights; he was momentously pressed by his new and distressed ally; he was disgusted with Parliaments; and yet was unwilling to enforce what his Judges had declared to be illegal,—Charles instantly recalled the new

duties on merchandize, which he had imposed on his own authority—and for this manifestation of the very opposite quality to arbitrary measures, Charles is so unfortunate as to have incurred the censure of Dr. Lingard for his "vacillating conduct!"* Had the King designed to have been the monstrous tyrant which the democratic writers in their historical calumnies have made him, he might at least have escaped from the censure of "vacillation!"

* Lingard, ix. 376.

CHAPTER IV.

MEETING OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT.

THE Favourite, who was always seeking for that popular favour which his envied greatness had lost him, is said in private letters to have been twice on his knees to intercede for a new Parliament. At length the King consented, and in March, Parliament assembled.

The elections foreboded no good; the country gentlemen recently discharged from their confinement were chiefly the favourite members. A courtier in describing the new Parliament, prophetically declared, "we are without question undone!"

The wealthiest men in the country now composed the House of Commons. A Lord, who probably considered that property, or as it was then usually called "propriety," was the true balance of power, estimated that they were able to buy the Upper House, his Majesty alone ex-

cepted! The aristocracy of wealth had already began to form a new class in the community, influenced by new interests, new principles, and a new spirit of independence.

In the Westminster election of two centuries past, we witness one of our own. The Duke had counted by his interest to bring in Sir Robert Pye. The contest was severe, and accompanied by the same ludicrous electioneering scenes which still amuse the mob in their saturnalia of liberty. When Sir Robert Pye's party cried out "a Pye! a Pye!" instantly resounded "a pudding! a pudding!" or "a lie! a lie!" At the present election, whoever had urged the payment of the loan was rejected, and passing over such eminent men as Sir Robert Cotton, and their last representative, a brewer and a grocer were actually returned as the two members for Westminster.

The King's speech opens with the spirit which he himself felt, but which he could not communicate.

"The times are for action, wherefore for example's sake I mean not to spend much time in words. Your good resolutions, so I hope, will be speedy, for tedious consultations at this conjuncture of time are as hurtful as ill resolutions.

"The common danger is the cause of this

Parliament, and supply at this time, is the chief end of it. I will use but few persuasions; for if, as now the case stands, the just defence of our true friends and allies be not sufficient, then no eloquence of men or angels will prevail.

"If you, as God forbid! should not do your duties in contributing what the state at this time needs, I must in discharge of my conscience use *those other means*, which God hath put into my hands, to save that, which the follies of some particular men may otherwise hazard to lose.

"Take not this as a threatening, for I scorn to threaten any but my equals; but an admonition from him, who, both out of nature and duty, hath most care of your preservations and properties. And though I thus speak, I hope that your counsels will lay on me such obligations as shall tie me by way of thankfulness to meet often with you.

"My Lord-Keeper will make a short paraphrase upon the text I have delivered you, which is, *To remember a thing, to the end we may forget it.* You may imagine I came here with a doubt of success of what I desire, remembering the dissensions of the last meeting,

but I assure you that I shall very easily and gladly forget and forgive what is past."*

This speech from the throne, is of so different a nature from any King's speech to which we are accustomed, that the reader may exercise his acumen in detecting the secret conflict of the feelings by which it was dictated. If we discover in it some touches of that lofty conception of Majesty which inspired Charles, whether on the throne, in the prison, or at the scaffold, there are others, which betray the sensibilities of the monarch who felt himself aggrieved, and of the man who would infuse friendliness into those obdurate tempers, whose national energy alone could retrieve his honour, and give peace to his private hours. But we see that Charles still looked on Parliaments with hopelessness. A letter-writer represents the opposite feelings of the day. "Some of the Parliament talk desperately—while others,

* In Dr. Lingard the critical reader may observe how all parties alike agree either in colouring highly, or casting into shade every thing relative to Charles the First. It accorded with this historian's system to give only the ungracious parts of this speech. The omission of the relenting and conciliatory passages shows either a deficient perception, or a deficient candour in the historian. All Catholic writers are equally inimical to Charles. Lingard, ix. 378.

of as high a course to enforce money, if they yield not." This is the perpetual action and reaction of public opinion. When one side refuses what is just, the other insists on more than is right.

Some ill omens of the Parliament appeared. Sir Robert Philips, the member for Somersetshire, moved for a general fast: "We had," said he, "one for the plague, which it pleased God to deliver us from, and we have now so many plagues of the Commonwealth about his Majesty's person, that we have need of such an act of humiliation." Sir Edward Coke held it most necessary, "because there are, I fear, some devils that will not be cast out but by fasting and prayer." The Romanists were always a burnt-offering on the altar of the Parliament, and a petition to renew the penal acts against Popish Recusants, was as pious an act as a penitential fast for all good Protestants. Secretary Cooke, however, was by no means averse to frighten them into supplies. In the last Parliament, he had discovered "a whole Parliament of Jesuits sitting in a fair-hanged vault" in Clerkenwell, and he would then have alarmed the Commons that these Jesuits, on St. Joseph's day, had designed to have occupied their own places. It was a gun-powder plot,

without the gun-powder. Cooke too, insinuated that the French ambassador had persuaded Louis, that the divisions between Charles and his people had been fomented by his ingenuity, and he assured the House that he knew the ambassador had been rewarded for his efforts. In all this there was some truth: a party, or rather a small college of Jesuits had been discovered, and the intrigues of the French ambassadors with the French household of the Queen, as we shall soon see, appear sufficiently evident; but ministers are supposed sometimes to have conspirators for "the Nonce," and ambassadors occasionally flatter themselves that they do more mischief than the world suspects them capable of. At this moment, the old secretary insisted, that though "the Lords of the Council had dug out of the earth this nest of wasps," still were the seculars and the regulars of the Romish priests more active and dangerous than ever. "Even at this time, they intend to hold concurrent assembly with this Parliament."* By this portentous secret, did the wily Secretary attempt to strike a panic through the bench of Bishops, by a hierarchy of the square-caps, and terrify the Commons by a phantom-parliament of Jesuits!

* Rushworth, i. 514.

The speeches in the great council of the kingdom at this particular period, which forms an era in the history of our constitution, from the circumstance of the PETITION OF RIGHT having been passed into an act, must have remarkably struck the mind of the philosophical historian; for Hume has transcribed entire pages of their noble sentiments and their irrefutable arguments. It seemed a grave and dignified assembly, who were solemnly met, perhaps for the last time, to ascertain the personal liberty of the subject, and the sacredness of property. Though perhaps somewhat awed by the lofty style of Charles, and somewhat touched by his more relenting emotions, still conscious of the dignity of their senatorial character, and indignant at the arbitrary acts which they had witnessed, the Commons now deeply entered into constitutional points, and the cases and the precedents gleaned by antiquaries and lawyers were animated by the living spirit of patriotism, glowing with public reverence, and sore with private injuries.

It is remarkable, that in the early speeches of the Commons, the name of the unhappy favourite no longer served as the war-whoop of a party. No historian has noticed this extraordinary change in the conduct of the Com-

mons; but, although we are not positively and entirely furnished with the secret history of its cause, it reveals itself in the course of the events. Charles, as we shall find, had laid a solemn injunction on the Speaker, that the House, in their debates, should abstain from any personal allusions to Buckingham. On this agreement, probably, had the King consented to call a Parliament. We shall trace the effects of this feeble expedient as we proceed.

The House unanimously voted against arbitrary imprisonments, and forced loans, and the Court party extenuated the past grievances. Charles, they observed, was a young monarch, who, on his accession to the throne, found himself engaged in war; and urged by his extreme necessities, which had solely originated in the refusal of supplies by the two former Parliaments.

The Commons voted five subsidies, about three hundred and fifty thousand pounds. This was considered as a liberal grant, although inadequate to the pressing exigencies and the pending enterprise.

Secretary Sir John Cooke, having brought up the report to the King, Charles expressed great satisfaction, declaring that at that moment he

felt more happy than any of his predecessors. Inquiring of Sir John by how many voices he had carried it? Cooke replied, "But by one." At which the King seemed appalled, and asked how many were against him? Cooke answered "None! the unanimity of the House made all but *one voice!*" The King was so strongly affected as to weep.* The emotion must have been indeed profound, for on all sudden emergencies Charles displayed an almost unparalleled command over the exterior violence of his feelings.

The Favourite himself was in transports. Sympathising with his Royal Master, he voluntarily offered himself as a peace-sacrifice. In an admirable effusion of his feelings at the council-table, he said, "I now behold you a great King, for Love is greater than Majesty; opinion that the people loved you not, had almost lost you in the opinion of the world; but you who are now loved at home will be feared abroad. I, who have been your favourite, may now give up that title to them; they to be your favourites, and I your servant. Consider

* This circumstance is mentioned in a manuscript letter, but the tears of Charles on this occasion have also got into history. What the Secretary declared to the House is in Rushworth, i. 525.

them as a body of many members but all of one heart. This is not the gift of five subsidies alone, but the opening a mine of subsidies that lieth in their hearts." At the close, the touches of personal feelings gush out of every sentence.

"To open my heart, please to pardon me a word more. I must confess I have long lived in pain, sleep hath given me no rest, favours and fortunes no content; such have been my secret sorrows to be thought the man of separation, and that divided the King from his people, and them from him; but I hope it shall appear they were some mistaken minds that would have made me the evil spirit that walketh between a good Master and a loyal people."

Buckingham added to this warm effusion that, for the good of his country, he was willing to sacrifice his honours, and, since his plurality of offices had been so strongly excepted against, that he was content to give up the Master of the Horse, to Marquess Hamilton, and the Warden of the Cinque Ports to the Earl of Carlisle, and was willing that the Parliament should appoint another Admiral for all services at sea.*

* The Duke's speech at the council-table is preserved in Rushworth, i. 525. The offer of his personal sacrifices I found in MSS. Letters. Sloane MSS. 4177. Letter 490, &c. &c.

It is as certain as human evidence can authenticate, that on the King's side all was grateful affection, and that on Buckingham's there was a most earnest desire to conciliate the favours of Parliament. The King undoubtedly sighed to meet Parliament with the love which he had at first professed; he declared that "he should now rejoice to meet with his people often;" and Buckingham, at times, was susceptible of misery, amidst his greatness. He feared the friends around him, and the terrific opposition, which seemed a growing monster, haunting his footsteps.

It could not have been imagined that the luckless favourite, on the present occasion, should have served as a pretext to set again in fermentation the chaos of evil. Yet it so happened, when Secretary Cooke, in closing his report of the King's acceptance of the subsidies, too imprudently or too zealously mentioned, that the Duke had fervently beseeched the King to grant the House all their desires. As Charles had laid an injunction that no personal allusion should be made to the Duke, it was but fair for the patriotic party to insist that the rule should equally be observed by the friends of the Court, and that the name of Buckingham should not be thrust forward to receive

honours which, even when deserved, they abhorred to bestow.

At the name of the Duke, Sir John Eliot caught fire, and vehemently checked the Secretary for having dared to introduce it, declaring "they knew of no other distinction but of king and subjects. By intermingling a subject's speech with the King's message, he derogated from the honour and majesty of a king. Nor would it become any subject to bear himself in such a fashion, as if no grace ought to descend from the King to the people, nor any loyalty ascend from the people to the King, but through him only."

This speech was received by many with acclamations; some cried out "Well spoken, Sir John Eliot!"* It marks the heated state of the political atmosphere, when even the lightest coruscation of a hateful name made it burst into flames.

But the supplies, which had raised tears from the fervent gratitude of the distressed monarch, though voted, were yet withheld. Charles had already reminded them that "if they did not

* I find this speech, and an account of its reception, in manuscript letters; the fragment in Rushworth contains no part of it. Sloane MSS. 4177. Letter 490, &c. &c.

make provision speedily, we shall not be able to put one ship to sea this year."

It was now resolved that grievances and supplies were to go hand in hand. Several ineffectual messages came from the King for turning the vote of the subsidies into an act. The negotiations of the Cabinet were said to be at a stand, nor could the soldiers either be disbanded or put into service. A startling message on the 12th of April, came down from the King for despatch of business. The House, struck with astonishment, desired to have it repeated. They remained sad and silent. No one cared to open the debate. A whimsical politician, Sir Francis Nethersole, suddenly starting up, entreated leave to tell his last night's dream. Some laughing at him, he observed that "Kingdoms had been saved by dreams." Allowed to proceed, he told them, that "he saw two good pastures, a flock of sheep was in the one, and a bell-wether alone in the other, a great ditch was between them, and a narrow bridge over the ditch."

He was interrupted by the Speaker, who told him that it stood not with the gravity of the House to listen to dreams, but the House inclined to hear him out.

"The sheep would sometimes go over to the

bell-wether, or the bell-wether to the sheep. Once both met on the narrow bridge, and the question was who should go back, since both could not go on without danger. One sheep gave counsel, that the sheep on the bridge should lie on their bellies, and let the bell-wether go over their backs. The application of this dilemma he left to the House."* It must be confessed, that the bearing of the point, whether the King or the Commons were to give way, was more ambiguous than some of the important ones which now formed the matters of their debates. *Davus sum, non Œdipus.* It is probable that this fantastical politician did not vote with the Opposition; for Eliot, Wentworth, and Coke, protested against the interpretatation of dreams in the House.

The House of Commons sat four days without speaking or doing anything†. Two months had elapsed since the meeting of Parliament, and the voted supplies were still doubtful.

* Manuscript Letter. † This appears in a MS. Letter.

CHAPTER V.

THE HISTORY OF THE KING'S CONDUCT WITH REGARD TO THE PETITION OF RIGHT.

THE Representatives of the people were now laying down some foundations for the establishment of their "Right," which produced the famous "Petition." They felt that they required a stronger security against the late irregular acts, than the passing of a mere vote of censure by their House. They projected the enactment of a law against arbitrary imprisonments; but in the discussion of this project, the highest principles of the constitution were as often disputed by one side as they were maintained by the other.

Selden with learned industry, vast as the amplitude of his mind, had to unbury the personal freedom of the subject in the dust of the Tower-records; and Coke, the greatest of lawyers, was still poring into Parliamentary rolls for

precedents. Some even would have awakened the hoar antiquity of popular liberty among our rudest ancestors. In what was called the conference of the Commons, held before the Lords, the personal freedom of the subject was admirably conducted, and yet the Lords considered that the Crown lawyers urged the more cogent arguments. Heath, the Attorney-General, affected to slight the precedents and arguments offered, and to consider the one as mutilated out of the records; and the other as proving rather against than for the Commons. Then it was that Sir Edward Coke rose, affirming to the House, upon his skill in the law, that "It lay not under Mr. Attorney's cap to answer any one of their arguments." Selden declared that he had written out all the records from the Tower, the Exchequer, and the King's Bench, with his own hand, and "would engage his head Mr. Attorney should not find in all these archives a single precedent omitted." Mr. Littleton vouched that he had examined every one *syllabatim*. Sometimes the references were to the articles of the Great Charter, "in a book to be seen in a library at Lambeth." An expression in Magna Charta admitted of a great latitude and difference in exposition,

36710

whether *Lex terræ* was to be expounded by *Lex Regis?* * But the personal liberty of the subject was rested on twelve direct and thirty-one indirect precedents. Of so ambiguous and delicate a nature was then the liberty of the subject, that it might depend on even the syllables of some forlorn precedent.

At that day what would have become of those "Rights and Liberties" which long after were declared to be "undoubted," but which, in the reign of Charles the First, could not have been established by any precedent? Precedent is but an ancient superstition, the wooden idol of the lawyers; for many things are practised on the plea of a precedent, which should rather have been a warning than an authority. Evil times have produced evil precedents; and the antiquity of a precedent may be an argument, not to prove its validity, but its obsolete nature. Before there was a precedent, there existed a cause to constitute one—the cause of a precedent then is the elder-born, and it is the philosopher who searches into causes, not the lawyer who hunts for precedents, whose wisdom will safest enlighten his fellow-citizens. Charles the First had the re-

* Hacket's Life of Archbishop Williams, ii. 79.

cords searched, as well as the lawyers of the Commons; both found their authorities, and both alike eulogise "the wisdom of former ages." Both pretended that our ancestors had obtained a perfection of judicature; but for ancient laws to retain their perfection, every thing must remain in the same state as when these laws were planned; but as all things have altered, do alter, and will alter, an amazing absurdity is the consequence of resting laws on precedents, since by adopting this popular error we shall find that we have laws for things that no longer exist, and none for things that do exist.

Any observation which I may here make is not meant as offensive to the gown, whose sons have often ranked with men of sublime integrity. We have our Selden and our Somers, as our neighbours have their L'Hôpital and their D'Aguesseau. But lawyers are not the purest sources of our political principles, nor the most philosophical of our inquirers. Their position in society ties them down to particular views; and this, the very excellence of lawyers becomes their inevitable defect; for the speculative judgment of the philosopher would only impede them in their single course. They must light up their object on one side, and they must

offuscate it on the other. In their argument they appeal to precedents, assuming that whatever has been, is authority for what now should be. In their eloquence to catch that momentary glory which vanishes around them, there is no sting in their conscience; with what artifice they first mould the bosoms of their auditors, and then cast the warm and melted metal of the passions into the form already prepared to return the impression! The great lawyers at this period on the side of the Commons, as on that of the King, equally succeeded in maintaining their adverse causes; and as a lawyer in the habit of facing a question but on one side, can rarely be a philosopher, who looks on both, we may easily conceive that both parties were equally convinced of the force of their own logic, and the validity of their own proofs.

All historians condemn Charles the First for his evasions, his equivocations, and his delays in not at first assenting to the "Petition of Right," to which he afterwards acceded; and his conduct on this occasion has further involved the character of this monarch in one of the heaviest denouncements of insincerity by our last historian, Mr. Hallam. That political school, who hold for their first principle that Charles the First had resolved to govern by arbitrary principles, ascribe his conduct on this

memorable occasion to his utter reluctance to grant the just liberties of the subject. The motives of no historical character are so clear and definite as those of the unhappy Monarch whose reign I am recording; his private and his public history often reflect a mutual light; and it is on this historical principle that we may view in a new, and surely in a truer light, the history of Charles the First as it concerns the "Petition of Right." It remains still untraced, and involves many singular points of considerable interest and curiosity.

At the momentous crisis when the "Petition of Right" was framing, the royal prerogative and the subject's privilege were more closely brought into contact, and it seemed as if they could not touch without endangering each other, so hard was it to distinguish limits which seemed lost in their shadowy separation. Sometimes Charles imagined, that "the House pressed not upon the abuses of power, but only upon power itself;" and sometimes the Commons doubted whether they had anything of their own to give, while their property and their persons seemed equally insecure. With Despotism on one side, as it appeared to the people, and Faction on the other, as it appeared to the Government, Liberty herself trembled.

The main point in the "Petition of Right" was the inviolability of the personal freedom of the subject. The Commons asserted that they were requiring no new law, but simply confirming the old: when Charles offered his "royal word" that he would preserve all the rights of the subjects, "according to the laws and customs of the realm," and as this assurance, however solemnly pledged, did not make them the less urgent for their "petition" being granted, he was suspicious that under the modest title of "a Petition for Right" his unfriendly Commons were tying him up by new bonds, and striking at the monarchy itself.

In this dilemma the King listened to his Attorney and his Sergeant, and they, as defenders of *his* "Right," declared that the propositions of the Commons tended rather to an anarchy, than a monarchy—that if they put a sword into the King's hand with one hand, they took it out with another—that a King must be allowed to govern by acts of State, otherwise he is a King without a council, or a council without a power. Sergeant Ashley, who advanced these principles of absolute power, was committed by the Lords, and, as was not unusual at that moment, was compelled to recant before the House of Commons; but

the man of law probably never considered his principles as erroneous as they appeared.

The Serjeant had said that "a King must be allowed to govern by acts of state." But if this new act altogether deprived the sovereign of the power of infringing on the personal freedom of the subject, how could he act as the preserver of the state in those sudden exigencies which sometimes occur, as in secret conspiracies, or early seditions? There are moments when Government and Liberty cannot coexist. In a political convulsion, is the supreme magistrate to be reduced to the helplessness of the people themselves, incapacitated to apply a timely, though an irregular remedy? Charles considered, that to be altogether divested of this power, so long acted on, was dissolving the very foundations and frame of monarchy, and surrendering, to "the petitioners for right," the rights of the throne, established in all preceding reigns. No State, at times, can exist without exercising this secret and instantaneous power. It was the dictatorship of the Roman Republic. So true is the principle, abstractedly considered, which the Crown Serjeant was compelled to recant on his knees, that in our own enlightened period of national freedom, after all which the revolution of William has done for us, we have

often been constrained to submit to Sergeant Ashley's principle of government. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act with us, places in the hands of Government this absolute power, for the exigencies of the State. But in the days of Charles, such an expedient was yet unknown. "The omnipotence of Parliament," if any assembly of men, subject to the illusions of the hour, and to the infirmities of all the passions, may be invested with such supernatural greatness, had yet no existence, and the idea would have been as anomalous and incomprehensible in those days, as the now portentous political style of "The Sovereignty of the People," which, it appears, is so familiar to us, and so obvious and undeniable in its sense, as to have become the echoed toast of political meetings.*

The King was hedged in by the most thorny difficulties. He considered that the Royal prerogative was bleeding on all sides, and however the House protested against republican princi-

* Recently, at some county meeting, a toast was designed that "the people are the source of all legitimate power;" but by mistake, as it was supposed, it was given out, "That the people are the legitimate source of all power;" which axiom was highly applauded, as much stronger than the other;—it is perhaps as clear and definite.

ples, even at this early period, as we shall hereafter see, there were some who had incurred the suspicion of being anti-monarchical.

The assent of the King to the "Petition of Right," at this precise moment, was not, as the matter now appears to us, a mere form. We must place ourselves in the situation of Charles, with all the inherited prejudices of the English monarchy; we must attend to his fears, and we must listen to his lawyers and judges; and we must allow him what in his own breast he felt, the consciousness of his rectitude. If his necessities had compelled him to carry on the affairs of the State, as he had done, we know to whom he would ascribe those cruel and woful necessities. If the King hesitated, and vacillated, and evaded and delayed, these very circumstances, in my mind, prove the sincerity of his conduct, as well as the affliction of his mind. If Charles were really insincere, as his inimical historians assert, nothing need have hindered him from according his assent to that which he never designed to execute. That artifice has not been unusual with faithless governors. Or if Charles were truly that tyrant, which republican writers maintain him to have been, he could have put an end at once to the painful discussions, by alleging the custom, if

not the law of his predecessors, who would never admit the Prerogative Royal even to be discussed. Charles gave leave, as he has himself expressed it, "of *free debate* on the highest points of our Prerogative Royal, which, in the time of our predecessors, Kings and Queens of this realm, were ever restrained as matters that they would not have discussed."* Happily for us, Charles allowed the yet infant genius of the British Constitution, all its nascent energies—it was still but a cradled Hercules, and many a serpent wound about the child. Rushworth, who never hazarded a reflection in delivering the speeches and pleadings at this crisis, has ventured to make an observation which I shall adopt. "Though," says our collector, "the matter delivered, by the length of it, may seem tedious to the reader, yet if he observe the language and style, as well as the subject matter, perhaps it will be no penance unto him." Certain it is, and glorious as it is certain, that at this period arose a generation of thinking men and active spirits, such as England had never before witnessed, and such as no other people can parallel. Charles, through the Lord-Keeper, in vain inquired

* Rushworth, i. 560.

"What need of a new law to confirm the old?" In his repeated messages he solemnly assured the Commons that "their liberties were not of grace, but of right;" and that he would "govern according to the laws of the realm." He was willing to satisfy all moderate minds, but there were inconveniences in compelling a Government in all cases to proceed in a legal and ordinary way of justice, for there were some where judges could not have the capacity of judicature, nor rules of law to direct them. Laws must be sometimes broken for the safety of the Commonwealth. Meanwhile he promised that in all future extreme cases, on the petition of the parties themselves, or address of the judges, the King would declare the cause of their commitment or restraint, as soon as it might be safely declared. We may perceive the insurmountable difficulties of describing that absolute power which Government may sometimes require, and which is so incompatible with the genius of a free people.

In a manuscript letter it is said that the House of Commons sate four days without speaking or doing any thing.

The King made an attempt to get rid of the "Petition" altogether. On the first of May, Secretary Cooke delivered an extraordinary

message. It was an inquiry whether they would rely upon the royal word, which should be royally performed? This startling question was followed by a long silence.

The awed messenger himself broke it. Cooke painted the hard situation in which a young king, newly come to his crown, had found himself, "but his Majesty assures us we shall not have the like cause to complain. Should we desire more than the established laws? Shall we strive after greater liberty than our fathers had, and put the crown into less? Do not think that by cases of law and debate we can make that not to be law which in experience we every day find to be necessary. In discharging the duties of my office I must commit men, and must not discover the cause to my gaoler or judge. If I commit without just cause, the responsibility falls on me." He concluded that Government was a solid thing, and must be supported for our good.

Such were the chief points urged by the feeble Secretary of State, who, however, was the organ of the real opinions of the Council-table.

Debates, of a nature as extraordinary as the question propounded to the Commons, shortly after broke forth. The whole scene exhibits a remarkable evidence of the great intelligence

and powerful talents of the leaders of the opposition, who so judiciously disposed of so tender and novel a point as the positive refusal of the King's word. Several speeches are reported in letters of the times which we do not find in Rushworth, whose collections here are disjointed, and seem very imperfect. Sir Nathaniel Rich observed that "Confident as he was of the royal word, what did any indefinite word ascertain?" Pym said, "We have his Majesty's coronation oath to maintain the laws of England, what need we then take his word;" and proposed to move, "Whether we should take the King's word or no?" This was indignantly resisted by Secretary Cooke. "What would they say in foreign parts, if the people of England would not trust their King?" and desired the House to call Pym to order. Pym replied, "Truly, Mr. Speaker, I am just of the same opinion I was, viz. that the King's oath was as powerful as his word." Sir John Eliot moved that it be put to the question, "because they that would have it do urge us to that point." In one of these debates Coke wound up all possible arguments in all the majesty of an oracle of law; a memorable speech, of which the following passage is not given in Rushworth.

"We sit now in Parliament, and therefore

must take his *Majesty's word no otherwise than in a Parliamentary way;* that is, of a matter agreed on by both Houses. His Majesty sitting on his throne in his robes, with his crown on his head, and sceptre in his hand, and in full Parliament; and his royal assent being entered upon record *in perpetuam rei memoriam.* This was *the royal word of a King in Parliament,* and not a word delivered in a chamber, and out of the mouth of a secretary at the second hand; therefore I motion, that the House of Commons, *more majorum,* should draw a petition *de droiet* to His Majesty, which, being confirmed by both Houses, and assented unto by His Majesty, will be as firm an act as any. Not that I distrust the King, but that I cannot take his trust but in a Parliamentary way." *

The Commons were as rocks, but there was a melting stream in the Lords thawing into conciliatory measures. A wise statesman, though a great political intriguer, was returning from his secession; Bishop Williams was once more in the busy scene. Although still deeply engaged with the Opposition, and viewing the popular cause with an intelligence which had anticipated by a century the comprehension of

* These speeches are entirely drawn from those manuscript letters to which I have frequently referred.

his contemporaries; he loved power too well to decline those means which were likely to obtain it. Perhaps few statesmen would have guided it with a more dexterous hand. A reconciliation between Williams and Buckingham was at this moment preparing by some intermediate connexions, and we discover by the biographer and confident of Williams, that the Bishop had a secret interview with the Favourite, who promised to reinstate him in all his former power. Meanwhile Williams was allowed to hold his present situation among the ranks of Opposition, where his popularity might enable him to do more service, than an open "ratting."

The biographer acknowledges, in his quaint manner, alluding to his conduct at this moment, that "it caused the Bishop to be suspected at first, as if he had been sprinkled with some Court Holy-water," but by the flattering pencil of this portrait-painter, this ugly feature is softened down, and even a grace added, by his insinuation, that the feeling spontaneously flowed from his own breast, to bear witness to the grandeur of majesty; and as this singular biographer scarcely ever ventures on a single idea without some learned reference, he applies a passage in Xenophon, who commends

such "unbespoken service," when he says that Hystaspes would do all that Cyrus bade, but Chrysantus would do all he thought was good for Cyrus before he bade him.

Our political Chrysantus, ambidextrous as he was, would have found it more difficult than his biographer, to have shown that his conduct was animated by any better spirit than that of intrigue. Guile and treachery were unhappily combined with great wisdom in the remarkable character of Bishop Williams. On the present occasion, though this might have been "unbespoken service," it was a proffer that the gentleman was prepared to wear the livery, which, not unreluctantly he had left off. There were fierce patriots among the Opposition, who as we now well know, were abject enough to creep into places, without the lofty ambition of this sagacious minister.

Although Bishop Williams, in conformity to his new system, was a stickler for the "Petition of Right," he proposes a clause, by which the Lords declared that "they would leave entire the SOVEREIGN POWER which was trusted to the King for the protection of his people." This clause, which they pronounced was not an alteration, but only an addition, seemed to neutralize the whole "Petition of Right."

The awful words "Sovereign Power" inspired debates as extraordinary as that on taking "the King's word."

"Let us look into the records to see what is Sovereign Power,—let us give that to the King which the law gives him, and no more," said one member, who desperately quoted Bodin to get at some idea of "Sovereign Power."*

Pym's speech is remarkable. "I am not able to speak to this question. I know not what it is. All our Petition is for the laws of England, and this power seems to be another distinct power from the power of the law. I know how to add Sovereign to his person, but not to his power. We cannot leave to him a Sovereign power; we never were possessed of it."

"I know," said Coke, "that prerogative is part of the law, but Sovereign Power is no Parliamentary word. It weakened Magna Charta and all our statutes, for they are absolute without any saving of Sovereign power. If we now add it, we shall weaken the foundation of law, and then the building must needs fall."

The Lords at length consented that their clause should not be inserted in the Petition to

* Rushworth, i. 468.

the throne; which should be presented as originally found.

All the messages of the King and all the firm resolutions of the Commons, only protracted their mutual anxieties. It now appears by the recent researches of Mr. Hallam, that the King, before he would grant his assent to the "Petition of Right," propounded to his Judges certain questions relative to his power of committing State prisoners.* Their answers were sufficiently favourable for the maintenance of his royal prerogative; and in consequence of their decisions Charles went down to the House,—and, having heard the Petition, gave his assent, not in the accustomed concise and positive form, but in a peculiar manner. He seemed to elude the Petition he granted by a long explanatory declaration, that "the King willed that right be done according to the laws and customs of the realm, &c. &c., he sought to set at rest the spirit which had so long tormented him, and flattered himself that by this contrivance the object remained in the same original vague state.

Charles the First by this "deceit," if it be deceit, expected, as Mr. Brodie, descending, as

* Hallam, i. 422.

usual, from the dignity of his historical style, observes, "to *outwit* the Commons." If Charles imagined that he could by such a simple artifice "*outwit*" a senate of the most intelligent men ever assembled, there was a degree of weak simplicity in his character which I have never detected. Charles, indeed, is reproached for this evasion, and we shall shortly find loudly denounced for his insincerity. In all these unhappy evasions and delays I can see only the unhappy conflicts of a royal mind, agitated by distrust and alarm at a novel state-instrument, which if it asked, as it avowed, no new law, he must, in his mode of reasoning, have considered as a supererogatory act; but which from the tenacity of the Commons, who had even refused accepting his royal word, he probably suspected as concealing some latent mischief.

The uncustomary and declaratory form which the King used on first giving his assent to the "Petition of Right," disappointed the Commons, and renewed their fears. The Commons sullenly returned to their House.

Instantly to assuage their stifled indignation, and not to be idle in idling times, for no subsidies were yet to be raised, they were seized with a sudden fit for religion. The halloo

was again raised at the trembling hares of Papistry. They were particularly alarmed at all "*Innovations* in religion." What could the Romanists think when they saw their own style adopted? The *Quintain* they selected to shoot their arrows at, was a Court chaplain, Dr. Roger Manwaring. He had published by the King's special command, a pair of sermons on "Religion and Allegiance." Pym, to judge by the length of his oratory, in divisions and sub-divisions must have spoken a large volume on these two little sermons, and Rouse, who opened the charge, compared the Court-divine to Guy Faux and his gang who sought "to blow up the Parliament."

The political divine was compelled to recant on his knees all "the errors and indiscretions" of his "crown-divinity" as it was then caustically termed; he recanted, dropping some hypocritical tears, either of terror or vexation, for the Court thought proper at this moment to leave their doctor of divinity to his fate. Without a single complaint against the King's taste for political divinity, they indirectly attacked him in his chaplain, and, as was wittily observed on that occasion, "as keepers beat whelps before their lions, to make them gentler."

On Tuesday, June 5th, a royal message an-

nounced that on the 15th the present sessions would close. This utterly disconcerted the Commons. They now gave vent to their suppressed feelings; they counted up all the disasters which had of late occurred, for a second expedition to Rochelle, under the Earl of Denbigh, had entirely failed.

All now was charged on one man. They knew not at a moment so urgent, when all their liberties seemed at stake, whether the Commons should fly to the Lords, or to the King!

"As they intended to furnish his Majesty with money, it was proper that he should give them time to supply him with council," said Sir John Eliot, who was renewing his old attacks on the Duke, when he was suddenly interrupted by the Speaker, who starting from the chair, declared that he was *commanded* not to suffer him to proceed. Eliot sat down in sullen silence. Here we find acknowledged, the secret order confided by the King to the Speaker, that the Commons should abstain from introducing the Duke's name in their debates.

On Wednesday, Sir Edward Coke broke the ice by an allusion to Buckingham—"That man, is the grievance of all grievances! as for

going to the Lords that is not *Via Regia*: *our* liberties are impeached; it is *our* concern!"

On Thursday, the vehement cry of Coke against Buckingham was followed up—"as when one good hound recovers the scent, the rest come in with a full cry." A sudden message from the King absolutely forbade them to asperse any of his Majesty's ministers, otherwise his Majesty would instantly dissolve them. Another confirmation of the secret determination of the King to which I have alluded.

The royal message fell like a thunderbolt; it struck terror—and at the instant, the House of Commons was changed into a scene of tragical melancholy. All the opposite passions of human nature, all the national evils which were one day to burst upon the country, seemed, on a sudden, concentrated in this single spot! Some were seen weeping, some were expostulating, and some in awful prophecy, were contemplating the future ruin of the kingdom; while others, of more ardent daring, were reproaching the timid, quieting the terrified, and infusing resolution into the despairing. Many attempted to speak, but were so strongly affected, that their very utterance failed them. The venerable Coke, overcome by his feelings when he rose to speak, found his learned elo-

quence falter on his tongue; he sat down, and tears were seen on his aged cheeks. The name of the public enemy of the kingdom was repeated, till the Speaker, with tears covering his face, declared he could no longer witness such a spectacle of woe in the Commons of England, and requested leave of absence for half an hour. The Speaker hastened to the King to inform him of the state of the House. They were preparing a vote against the Duke, for being an arch-traitor and arch-enemy to King and kingdom, and were busied on their "Remonstrance," when the Speaker, on his return, after an absence of two hours, delivered his Majesty's message, that they should adjourn till the next day.

This was an awful interval of time; many trembled for the issue of the next morning. One letter-writer calls it "that black and doleful Thursday!" and another, writing before the House met, observes, "What we shall expect this morning, God of heaven knows! we shall meet timely."*

Charles, probably, had been greatly affected by the report of the Speaker, on the extraordinary state into which the whole House had been thrown; for on Friday the royal message

* This last letter is printed in Rushworth, i. 609.

imported, that the King had never any intention of "barring them from their right, but only to avoid scandal, that his ministers should not be accused for their counsel to him; and still he hoped that all Christendom might notice a sweet parting between him and his people." This message quieted the House, but did not suspend their preparations for a "Remonstrance," which they had begun on the day they were threatened with a dissolution.

On Saturday, while they were still occupied on the "Remonstrance," unexpectedly, at four o'clock, the King came to Parliament, and the Commons were called up. Charles spontaneously came to reconcile himself to Parliament. Hume observes that "Charles was apt hastily to correct any hasty steps which he had taken." This at least evinces an earnest intention to correct error. The charge of insincerity, of which Charles the First is so generally accused, frequently requires to be explained; his situation was often a critical one. On the present occasion he hastened to comply with the joint request of the two Houses, suggested by the moderating language of an independent country gentleman, Sir Robert Philips, to give his assent in the usual form. It is probable that Charles might have quickened his motives on

this occasion, to save, if possible, his unfortunate minister from the impending storm of "The Remonstrance."

The King now commanded to cut off from the Bill his former answer, and replace it by this second assent, according to the ancient form: *Soit droit fait come il est desiré.* "Let it be law as it is desired." But Charles at the time observed, that "his second answer in no wise differed from his first, for I always meant to confirm your liberties, trusting to your protestations that you neither mean nor can hurt my prerogative. It is my maxim, that the people's liberties strengthen the King's prerogative, and the King's prerogative is to defend the people's liberties." Are we to consider this declaration as phrases to which the King really affixed no ideas? Are we to condemn the elevated spirit of Charles the First, as destitute of all honour and sincerity, intent solely on governing by absolute power; are we to believe that at no time whatever he wished to reign as a constitutional monarch? Yet were he the tyrant which a party has proclaimed, it must then follow that Charles the First, after such frequent retractations, and such continued compliances with the wishes of Parliament, at least yielding to them as often as

commanding them, was a tyrant unskilled in tyranny, which always takes the shortest courses to obtain its purposes.

The King concluded by reminding the House that "he had done his part, and that if the Parliament had no happy termination, the sin was theirs—he was free from it!"

Popular gratitude is as vociferous as it is sudden. Both Houses returned the King acclamations of joy. Every one seemed to exult at the happy change which a few days had effected in the fate of the kingdom. Every where the bells rung, bonfires were kindled, an universal holiday was kept through the town, and spread to the country; but an ominous circumstance has been registered by a letter-writer; the common people who had caught the contagious happiness, imagined that this public joy was occasioned by the King's consent to commit the Duke to the Tower!

At this moment a foreigner would have imagined that he beheld a happy nation, and even an Englishman might have imagined that the discontented were satisfied! Yet the joy of the Commons did not outlast the bonfires in the streets. They resumed their debates as if nothing had occurred—they handled the same torture by which they had before racked

their victim—there was no sympathy for the feelings of the man whom they addressed as their sovereign; that common sympathy was denied which man owes to man, and which, if it be not granted, exasperates our infirmities, and renders them still more obdurate.

The active spirits in the Commons were resolute in hunting down the game to the death. After all the secret management of Charles with the Speaker, that no personal allusions should be made to the Duke, and when the House had nearly closed with their chief grievances, the debate was as hot as ever, and now they distinguished how the Duke was "*the* cause of some, and *a* cause of other grievances." One member, seeing the temper of the party, reminded them of the King's earnest desire that all personal aspersions might be forborne, which the King would accept as a proof of their moderation. Another member prayed that "the Remonstrance" they were preparing, should convince the King that it comes from a *public sense*, and not from *private ends*. Sir Benjamin Rudyard suggested that the subject of excessive power should be urged home; thus, without a name, it will reach the Duke, and all others in future times. He declared that the Duke was a man of honour, who had done many great and good

offices to this House. The close of the speech of this pure patriot is somewhat remarkable, and I conceive in favour of Buckingham. "If the forfeiture of my life could breed an opinion that you should have no occasion to complain at your next meeting, I would pawn it to you. Nor let any man say, it is fear which makes us desist; we have showed already what we dare do."

The offensive "Remonstrance" against the Duke was sent up, though the Speaker prayed to be excused presenting it, but the House would not concede that favour. Charles received "the Remonstrance" like a man who felt an injury.

After having granted the famous "Petition," he declared, that he had not expected such a return as this "Remonstrance." After the reading of the Remonstrance, the Duke fell on his knees, desiring to answer for himself, but Charles no way relaxed in testifying his personal favour.*

The temperate manner in which the King received this remonstrance, was a disappointment to its framers, who were now convinced that the King would not give up his friend. It sharpened their spirits. "The chief tri-

* This interview is taken from a MS. letter.

bunes," as Hacket designates the leaders of the Opposition," spoke their discontents aloud— "they had given a bountiful levy of five subsidies, and were called fools for their labour."

This sounds like a sentence from a page of Mr. Brodie's volumes; a curious instance of the style reflecting the ignoble feelings of a party, where what should be elevated is mean, and what should be indignation, sinks in to spite. Their deeds were now in union with their style.

To avenge themselves for the little effect produced on the King, by "the Remonstrance," they immediately fell on Tonnage and Poundage. They struck at, as the King observes, "one of the chief maintenances of my crown." The legal discussions are of the most subtile nature.*

One of the great sources of the royal revenues was Tonnage and Poundage, or what we now understand as "the Customs." At the commencement of every reign, they formed the usual grant. No complaint had been raised about them pending the fate of the "Petition of Right." Now the petitioners unexpectedly declared, that these rates could no longer be levied without a grant of Parliament; they must be considered as a free gift, not an in-

* Rushworth, i. 628.

herent right; and for this they at once appealed to their recent "Petition of Right."

They flattered themselves that the King would barter the Minister to provide for his own necessities. They hardly yet knew the force of Charles's character.

The Duke was often charged with actions and with expressions of which unquestionably he was not always guilty. At this moment he came down to the House to clear himself of certain calumnies, and personally to face certain members, with whom they appear to have originated. On all such occasions there was a singular openness in his conduct. He never shrunk from the troublesome task of clearing himself from popular odiums. His former defence against the formal charges of the Commons, had shown that he could have vindicated himself, if his enemies had chosen to be his listeners. Buckingham never appears to have been a criminal to the nation, although no arts were left unpractised to convert him into a traitor to his country.

Charles at this moment, to repel the preparatory accusations of the Commons, ordered that the information which had been preferred in the Star-chamber against Buckingham, should be taken off the file, as "his Majesty is fully

satisfied of the Duke's innocency, from his own certain knowledge, as by other proofs."

A most offensive "Remonstrance," for the Petition accorded did not prevent remonstrances from multiplying apace, was now framing against the Duke, and to be more than personal, if possible, they condescended to drag in his mother as a patroness of Popery. It was ungenerous to afflict the solitary Sovereign, who on his side had yielded—by these more poignant insults which he could less endure. Their conduct had nothing dignified in its proceedings, for their boldness on this occasion was artful. They imagined that they held the Sovereign at their own disposal, by the power they were assuming of renewing or withdrawing his revenues from the Customs. If they acted with the daring of the lion, they did not forget the cunning of the fox; and if the mane of the nobler creature was erected, there was also seen hanging the obscene tail of the meaner animal; that miserable conjunction of the political chimera, which in the frontispiece of an edition typifies the politician of Machiavel.

On the 26th of June, the Commons were in the act of the last reading of their "Remonstrance," the object of which was to dispute the King's right to levy duties and customs. The

Remonstrance was already engrossed and would have been presented within two hours—suddenly the King hastened to the House, sent for the Speaker, and prorogued the Parliament.

The unpremeditated address from the throne has all the freedom of a conversation; its simplicity of style betrays the warmth of injured feelings, and it essentially enters into a history of the "Petition of Right," for it throws a clear and steady light on the vacillating conduct of Charles the First, and more particularly on the extraordinary circumstance of his withdrawing his second answer to the "Petition of Right," which had satisfied the Commons, and substituting the former one, which they had rejected.

Charles told the Parliament—"It may seem strange, that I come so suddenly to end this Session, before I give my assent to the Bills. I will tell you the cause, though I must avow, that I owe the account of my actions to God alone.

"It is known to every one, that awhile ago the House of Commons gave me a remonstrance; how acceptable any man may judge. I am sure no wise man can justify it."

This alludes to the late Remonstrance about Buckingham, in which the Countess, his mother, was introduced. There is nothing insulting in

the style of Charles the First, in his reflection on the painful personalities included in that Remonstrance; yet to show in what spirit many have written on this unfortunate Monarch it may be worth noticing, that for this very passage, Oldmixon a violent party-writer, accuses Charles with having insulted the House of Commons by "calling them fools."

"Now a second Remonstrance is preparing for me to take away one of the chief maintenances of my Crown, by alleging that *I have given away my right by my answer to your Petition.*

"This is so prejudicial to me, that I am forced to end this Session some few hours before I meant, being not willing to receive any more Remonstrances, to which I must give a harsh answer; and since I see that even the House of Commons begin already to make false constructions of what I granted in your Petition, *lest it be worse interpreted in the country, I will now make a declaration concerning the true intentions.*"

Charles proceeds, "The professions of both Houses in the time of hammering this Petition, were no way to trench upon my Prerogative, saying, they had neither intention nor power to hurt it. Therefore, it must needs be

conceived, that I have granted no new, but only confirmed the ancient liberties of my subjects." "On the word of a King," Charles then promised that for the time to come they should not have the same cause of complaint, and that what had been done should never be drawn into example to the prejudice of the subject. "But as for Tonnage and Poundage, it is a thing I cannot want, and was never intended for you to ask, nor meant by me, I am sure, to grant.

"I command you all that are here to take notice of what I have spoken at this time, to be the true intent and meaning which I granted you on your Petition; but especially you, my Lords, the Judges; for to you only under me, belongs the interpretation of laws, for none of the Houses of Parliament, either joint or separate, *what new doctrine soever may be raised*, have any power either to make or declare a law without my consent."

It was necessary to furnish the reader with this address of the King's, to enable him to decide on the final circumstance, in this history of the "Petition of Right;" a circumstance which has called down on the unhappy monarch a remarkable reprobation of his faithlessness by our last writers—by Dr. Lingard, who is always indifferent to the fate of Charles;

by Mr. Brodie, who sees nothing but a tyrant in the monarch, and by Mr. Hallam, who somealarms us with his eloquence.

"Charles had the *absurd and audacious insincerity*, for we can use no milder epithets, to circulate one thousand five hundred copies of it (the Petition of Right) through the country, after the prorogation, with his first answer annexed; an *attempt to deceive without the possibility of success.* But instances of such ill-faith, accumulated as they are, through the life of Charles, render the assertion of his sincerity a proof either of historical ignorance, or of a want of moral delicacy."*

This impassioned passage has been transcribed with tremulous nerves—it bears about it something of the thunder and the infallibility of the Vatican, and casts a reforming historian like myself into a forlorn state of excommunication.

There seems to me to have been much curious misconception concerning the "Petition of Right." Even Lord Clarendon deemed that "it did not prejudice the crown;" why therefore was it delayed? Charles the First has been blamed even by contemporaries,† not hos-

* Hallam, i. 423—Brodie, ii. 196.

† Hr cket's life of Archbishop Williams, ii. 77.

tile to him, for deferring the grant of this "Petition," to which at length he acceded, but the grace of a ready compliance was lost. Those, however, who were of this opinion, decided by the open profession of the Commons, that they were requiring no new law, and that the subject was only claiming what he already possessed. Even Hume censures Charles the First for his evasions on this occasion; but at the same time, his philosophical mind could not pass by such a political crisis without taking the most enlarged view—for after all which has been said on this subject, we shall soon show that this new law, professing to be nothing but an old one, was an innovation involving the most unexpected consequences.

"The King's assent to the 'Petition of Right,' produced such a change in the Government as was *almost equivalent to a revolution.*" Such is the forcible precision by which the philosophical historian conveys the result of his opinions—and in four immortal pages he has separated the ramifications of the question on both sides. Mr. Brodie, repeating the avowed principle of the Commons, insists against Hume, that the "Petition of Right" merely confirmed statutes, which, though occasionally eluded, were sufficiently clear in favour

of personal liberty.* But neither the philosopher Hume nor the Monarch himself were of Mr. Brodie's opinion, since the one has explained, and the other was alarmed at the complicate difficulties of the question.

Before Charles the First gave his assent to the "Petition of Right," he secretly propounded certain questions to his Judges relative to arbitrary commitments. Their opinions being such as to induce the King to conclude that the royal prerogative was left sufficiently free for the great purposes of government, he then gave his *first* assent—but as the judicial decisions had not entirely removed his apprehensions, his first assent to this novel state document was given in an unusual form, being explanatory of what he conceived to be its intent. Afterwards he conceded it as the petitioners wished, in the accustomed words. This discovery of Charles the First's secret conference with his Judges, before he had granted his first assent, Mr. Hallam fortunately made in the Hargrave collection, but his inference is more particularly his own—for he alleges the fact to show how "the sincerity of Charles, in according his assent to the 'Petition of Right' may be estimated."

* Brodie, ii. 188.

When, shortly after the Commons attacked the sources of the royal revenue, appealing to this very "Petition of Right" for their plea, it realized all those fears and doubts which had occasioned the King's former hesitation and delay, Charles the First started like a man entrapped. In his closing address to Parliament, he returned to his *first* qualified or explanatory assent. In publishing this "Petition of Right," if the King retained an atom of sincerity, he could not append the *second* unqualified assent, for the reasons which he had himself alleged in his speech—"lest it should be worse interpreted in the country."

Assuredly, Charles the First could never for an instant imagine that he was *deceiving* the public by withdrawing his last, and substituting his first assent; the public were too well acquainted with both the assents—and they had now before them his speech from the throne. Whatever might have been all along his hesitation and his doubts, any deception now would have been, as Mr. Hallam acknowledges, "an attempt to deceive without the *possibility of success*." An absurdity too great to suppose, which, however, Mr. Hallam does suppose!

To this, then, amounts the denouncement

of Charles the First's "absurd and audacious insincerity;" and to the papal excommunication which I have already noticed, must the historian be damned, who like myself gives this "proof either of historical ignorance, or of a want of moral delicacy." Had Mr. Hallam and preceding writers compared the speech from the throne, addressed to the nation, before the King published the "Petition of Rights," at least they would have found the reasons which induced Charles the First to withdraw his second assent. No deception was, or could be attempted. Had the King issued the "Petition of Right" with the second assent, *after what had occurred,* the document indeed would have been a faithless one, and the King would have indeed then practised a gross deception; but in the substitution of his first assent, explanatory of the intention of the Petition, I see only an evidence of his sincerity, and not of his deception.

CHAPTER VI.

RECONCILIATION WITH WILLIAMS: SIEGE OF ROCHELLE, SECOND EXPEDITION: ASSASSINATION OF BUCKINGHAM.

DURING this ardent political contest, and the vacillations of Charles the First in granting the "Petition of Right," and his alarm at being left at the mercy of the Commons for one of the constant sources of his revenue, affairs not less urgent were agitating the Cabinet.

It is evident that Buckingham found himself inadequate to stand against the popular odium which had been successfully raised against him; the defeat at Rhé had not inspired confidence in the House of Lords, where he counted on securing most friends.

Amidst the disordered state of the nation, an army, more formidable than ever, was immediately required for a fresh expedition to relieve the brave Rochellers, who were closely

besieged by the sovereign of France, and were at their last extremities.

At this critical moment the Bishop of Lincoln, that instrument of state whom Buckingham hated, and whom he had utterly rejected, was gladly embraced. The Minister possibly imagined that he might graft the popularity of a leader of the Opposition on his own measures, and that the administration was likely to be materially assisted by his secret communication. Necessity can convert the oldest enmities into fresh friendships; so quickly political antipathies may return to political unions!

The Bishop of Lincolon had put forth the signs of a relenting sympathy to his former masters; first by suggesting that clause which had been designed to neutralise any latent mischief in the "Petition of Right." This had obtained him an interview with the Lord Duke; and now on the subject of the Customs, which the Commons were attempting to wrest from the sovereign, Williams had concurred with the King's interpretation, maintaining that these duties were inviolably attached to the royal prerogative, and were absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the sovereignty, more particularly in securing our maritime dominion. The subtile politician had

even ventured so far as openly to censure the conduct of his friends in the Commons; but he was singing to the deaf, and he found that their natures were a metal too obdurate for his polisher to work on.

The King was not insensible to the reconciling spirit of an able though discarded servant of the Crown, and the Bishop of Lincoln was favoured by kissing the King's hand, and admitted to a private audience. Charles the First was extremely anxious to learn Williams's opinion of the means by which he might win the affections of his Commons. There was nothing the King, like his Minister, had so much at heart as to become popular: but they were both much too young for hacknied statesmen!

In this conference with the King the Bishop recommended that temporising measures should be tried on the numerous party of the Puritans; he considered that it was possible by connivance and indulgence to bend their rugged stubbornness—"Not," as he remarkably added, that "he would promise they would be trusty very long to any Government." The King approved of the council, declaring that he had had some thoughts of the same kind himself.

By this observation of Bishop Williams, made

in 1628, it would appear that he conceived that those who are here designated as Puritans, were then intent on overthrowing the Government, either as State Puritans, the Monarchy; or as Religious Puritans, the Hierarchy; but as under the present sovereign no dismemberment could take place, and as the one could not fall without the other, in the party described by Williams, we must include both of them. Indeed in modern history it seems to me always impossible to separate religion from politics; religion engenders politics, and politicians eagerly adopt that most certain mode of enlisting the people on their side. This last secret was confessed by one of our great leading patriots of this period. Predominance in the Government is a term much clearer than any which may be put forth by a sect of religionists, or a faction of politicians.

It was now June, and the Deputies of La Rochelle with Soubise, since January, had been daily urging Buckingham to redeem his plighted honour by hastening an effectual aid to their compatriots. The Earl of Denbigh, in an expedition in May, had reached the Mole, but declaring it impregnable, after firing some cannon, had ingloriously retreated home. Yet though the Rochellers had witnessed this mor-

tifying scene of an English fleet disgracing itself before the eyes of France, still were those unbroken spirits looking towards the shores of Britain, where, amidst their feverish dreams, they seemed to behold, as in a vision, the single saviour of their liberties, and of the independence of Protestant Europe. But now the hour had struck, when those unconquered men were fast perishing, suffering as human beings had never suffered before.

The town of La Rochelle held fifteen thousand Huguenots. It stood a siege of more than a year, and the French monarch with the royal army, were so outwearied with the impregnability of the town, and the still less yielding nature of the inhabitants, that Louis XIII. was displeased with Cardinal Richelieu for not abandoning the siege. But that great minister had now before his eyes the mighty vision of his youth, inspired with the double inspiration of an apostolical minister sent forth to establish the faith of Rome, and of a minister of state to trample on rebellion. Imploring the King to consider the enterprise as necessary as it was glorious, the Cardinal assumed the command over the discontented army. The versatility of his genius was here shown; he restored its discipline with such severity, or with such impartial

justice, that in his "*Testament Politique*" the Cardinal exults how "during thirteen months an army of twenty-five thousand men were as obedient as if they had consisted of a religious order bearing arms."

The story of the siege of La Rochelle is one of the most extraordinary events in modern history. It opens for our contemplation the glorious but the painful spectacle of an immolation to the spirit of Liberty, inspired by a human being who seemed at that time, and at no other, to have been placed above our common humanity.

The extraordinary character of Jean Guiton, the heroic mayor of La Rochelle, was known to Buckingham. The diminutive person of this man concealed a heart impregnable to fear, and a mind superior to calamity. Guiton had wished to decline the mayoralty; but his fellow-citizens, as if conscious of their man, pressed his acceptance. It was then that Guiton, holding up a poignard to the commonalty, declared, "Since you persist in having me for your mayor, I will take the painful office, on condition that it be permitted to me to plunge this poignard in the breast of the first man who shall talk of a capitulation; and I consent that it be used on the same terms on myself

should I ever propose the surrender of this place. I therefore demand that this poignard remain on the table of our council-chamber, ready to be used for this sole purpose."

Through all the trying horrors of scenes which seemed to pass beyond the imagination, or at least the endurance of man, this immoveable spirit witnessed the desolation around him in all the forms of death. The miserable citizens of La Rochelle were driven to the sharpest and the most frightful extremities. Provision now became the most precious treasure, and was as secretly hidden. At length not an animal, not a reptile which had life in it, was remaining in the town; and they were reduced to feed on what had never before been food, on old leather and skins, which they made succulent by soaking them in tallow, and parchment boiled in sugar was then an exquisite and costly meal. When Guiton was told that the people were perishing in heaps in the streets, and that it would not be long ere famine would carry off all the inhabitants: "It is sufficient," coldly replied the glorious or the insensible patriot; "it is sufficient should there remain but a single man to close the gates." A female of his acquaintance was shown to him, whose life was pass-

ing away in its last puff of breath; "Are you surprised at this?" said Guiton, "it is what must very shortly happen to us all, if we are not soon succoured." It was no unusual sight to observe the dying bearing their own coffins to burial-grounds and laying themselves down to die in them; and on the entrance of the French army, one of the most frightful spectacles were the vultures hovering over the unburied dead. Once a tumult gathered to force the Mayor to capitulate—but at the sight of the heads of twelve of their fellow-citizens affixed to one of the gates, the vociferous mob slunk away in horror and in silence. Once Guiton seemed touched by the cries and tears of helpless women and their expiring children, —"We can never surrender to an implacable enemy," he cried, "there are no terms for us! but if my flesh can afford you a meal, you may share it!" In the night-time some half-famished beings were observed stealing out of the town, hanging like shadows on the outer walls, to pluck the wild plants, growing out of the stones, or might be seen crawling to the shore for the chance of picking up some shell-fish; this was a melancholy contrast with what often occurred on those same walls in the morning; there a troop of the Burghers, armed and shout-

ing, would show themselves in sport, laughing and singing in chorus, to convince the besiegers that the Rochellers were not yet reduced to despair; but the truth of the night-scene had betrayed the illusion of the morning.

Guiton, in this government of terror, rarely broke his sullen silence, except to assure his people that they might depend on the King of England: sometimes he showed a letter from Charles the First, sealed with the arms of England—he positively fixed on St. Michael's day for the arrival of the English. But he had too often repeated his information—till even Guiton himself, as well as others, began to suspect the perfidy of Buckingham. This Mayor of La Rochelle, to the last moment of the siege, maintained the same unchangeable character—but with no favourable impression of the English—and he observed, when Rochelle at length was given up to the French King on the last ineffectual expedition, after Buckingham's death, that "it was better to yield to a King who knew how to take the town of La Rochelle, than to him who had not known how to succour it." This has ever been the usual style of foreigners who have looked to England for that independence which they could not secure for themselves; and it has been too often our fate, to

have found that our aid to foreign intriguers has been thwarted by difficulties at home, or by the ingratitude of the foreigners who had received it. Guiton concluded his course like others of his class; he gladly retired to London, where the heroic Mayor of La Rochelle appears to have lived in obscurity and quiet.

At London, the Deputies of La Rochelle had to perform a task of the most delicate nature: they suspected the sincerity of Buckingham. It was not impossible, they thought, that he might make use of them as a means to act on the French Cabinet, and it had been rumoured among the Rochellers, that the Cardinal had said there was nothing to fear from the fleet of England; they ascribed the delays for their relief to purposed negligence; they considered the parade of the English fleet, under the Earl of Denbigh, to have been a mere show and deception. But all these surmises were to be a close secret suppressed in their own aching hearts; for the Deputies feared to displease Charles, if they complained of the minister.

On the 23d of July, they however ventured to present a petition to the King. The style is pathetic. "Sire, pardon men on the borders of their graves, if involuntary groans escape from them; it is natural with those who are

at their end, to close their lives by sighs, and certainly this is our condition, if, after all which has been done, it should now be succeeded by the least delay. We were consoled by the promise that the fleet would sail in a fortnight, twenty days past; fourteen more were added, and now the second month is complete. Good God, Sire! how long is this time for men who want a mouthful of bread. We conjure your Majesty by the tears and the cries of thousands languishing to die, and by the interests of a million of others, who will be crushed under their ruins on that day which shall witness the destruction of La Rochelle. We conjure you, Sire, by the glory of your sceptre, under whose shadow they have placed themselves, not to suffer this innocent blood to tarnish, for ages to come, the splendour of your crown." They declared, with policy, not with confidence, that they were well persuaded of the zeal of the Duke of Buckingham and the Council, to hasten the promised aid; but when they had already witnessed these fatal delays, they had reason to fear that his Majesty was ill-served, and that some hidden hand had clandestinely stopped what the zeal of others had advanced. "It is too usual," they concluded, "with the miserable to be suspicious—we may err!"

And err they did! These foreigners seem not to have been sensible of the difficulties which Charles the First had himself to wrestle with. In vain the King had repeatedly reminded the Parliament that "the times were for action," and it now appears, that even the fleet, which was then collecting at Plymouth, could never have been dispatched, had not Buckingham drained all his own resources. After his death, it appeared that he had furnished unlimited sums to the King, without keeping any accounts whatever, and we are told his family could never establish their claims. Profuse of his fortunes in the cause which he had adopted, he had resolved by a nobler profusion of life itself, to perish or conquer on that impregnable mole, which the great genius of Richelieu had thrown out for above a mile in the ocean. This solemn determination in Buckingham, I have observed in more than one quarter. He swore to Soubise and the Deputies, on departing from Plymouth, that he would die in combat, or enter La Rochelle.* In the manuscript of Gerbier, his confidential agent, architect and engineer, Gerbier, after describing some tremendous machines, projected for blowing up the dyke, modelled by works which the Prince of

* Mercure François.

Parma had employed at the siege of Antwerp, tells us that by command of the Duke he wrote to the Rochellers, and had himself paid the secret messenger a hundred jacobuses. The note run, "Hold out but three weeks, and, God willing, I will be with you, either to overcome or to die there." The Duke, a little before his departure from York-house, being alone with Gerbier in his garden, and giving his last commands for Gerbier's journey towards Italy and Spain, on occasion of one of his gentlemen bringing him a prophecy of Lady Eleanor Davies, the Cassandra of those days, "that the duke should end his life that month,"—Buckingham observed that he had also received a letter from a considerable personage to substitute another in his place; but no art of man should prevent him. "Gerbier, if God please, I will go, and be the first man who shall set his foot on the dyke before Rochelle, to die, or do the work, whereby the world shall see the reality of our intentions for the relief of that place." He had before, in his closet, declared himself to the same purpose.

Of Buckingham's magnanimity in this desperate enterprise there can be no question, nor of the motive. Yet in his day his sincerity was strongly suspected, and until he had left his

corpse on the mole of La Rochelle, never would his faith or his honour have been credited. He will, however, be found to deserve even a higher eulogy, when it is known how incessantly he resisted the superstitions of the age, in reiterated omens and prodigies and prophecies of his fate. On this occasion they even raised the apparition of his father, who, however, thought it best not to come in contact with the son, appearing by the circuitous means of an old steward; yet the ghost, to prove himself genuine, we are told, communicated some secret intelligence to the steward, which staggered Buckingham, who declared that "it was unknown to any but himself, and could only have been revealed by God or the Devil." All these omens, such as his picture falling out of its frame, and even the secret whispered from the ghost, might be not so difficult to account for, when we consider that the old Countess, his mother, who was in tears all day since the Duke had taken his final resolution, was practising her own superstitious fancies, to work on the imagination of her son. Many a warning too of assassination had the Duke received; but so utterly reckless was he of his person, that once on a journey he left his company and rode forwards to join a stranger, who was said to

have had a sinister design, and conversing with him, so delighted the man, that he declared the Duke was quite a different person to what he had been made to believe him. When the remonstrance of the Commons was distributed among the nation, he had been frequently advised to wear a quilted coat of mail, or other secret armour; but he contemptuously replied, "There are no Roman spirits left."

A few days before the Duke set off on his last expedition, he gave a farewell mask and supper, at York-house, to their Majesties. In the mask the Duke appeared followed by Envy with many open-mouthed dogs; these represented the barkings of the people; they were followed by Fame and Truth. The courtly allegory expressed the King's sentiment and the Favourite's sanguine hope.

The circumstances of Buckingham's assassination have varied in the detail, as they were reported by different persons. The blow was instantaneous—the effect immediate—terror and confusion darted among all who saw, and spread to all who heard. None at first really knew how the affair had happened, or who could be the assassin. Even the papers discovered in Felton's hat, Lord Clarendon supposed consisted of a few lines from "the Remonstrance." Lord Carle-

ton's letter to the Queen, which I have elsewhere given,* and who was himself present and saved Felton from the vengeance of the military, is imperfect; so careless are the hurried transcriptions in a moment of agitation. Since then, I have seen in a collection of autographs, the identical paper, which differs from all preceding ones. It may surprise the curious reader to be informed that Felton's paper appears in the Mercure François, literally translated; so that the French actually possessed the document in 1628, which never entered into our history till 1825, when Dr. Lingard first printed it from the original. I notice this circumstance as one evidence of the authenticity of the secret history, often preserved in the Mercure; sometimes the production of Louis XIII. and Cardinal Richelieu.†

The deputies of La Rochelle had been warmly engaged with the Duke in conversation: still fearfully suspicious that he designed to delay the expedition, Buckingham showed them fresh letters, which noticed that the Rochellers had within a few days received

* Curiosities of Literature, vol. iii.

† Mercure François, xiv. 650. Dr. Lingard, ix. 394. In the French the two paragraphs are transposed. If I am not mistaken, the original consists of two papers joined together, which would account for the transposition.

a convoy of provisions, and that fifty head of cattle had entered La Rochelle. They exclaimed against the intelligence as only an artifice of the Cardinal's to retard the departure of the fleet. They declared that oxen must have wings to fly before they could enter that fated town. Soubise joined them, protesting against the Duke's trusting to such perfidious intelligence. The noisy vivacity which the French usually assume when they would carry their point, accompanied by strong gesticulations, induced the bystanders to imagine that they were speaking to the Duke with great animosity. Buckingham assured them that not a day should be lost; he was hastening to take his last leave of the King, who was four miles from Plymouth. Turning from them, on leaving the apartment, he stopped in the passage where Sir Thomas Frier waited to show him a plan which Buckingham was considering with deep attention. This officer was a short man. An unseen hand, reaching over his shoulder, struck a knife into the left breast of Buckingham;—it pierced the lungs, and was left plunged into his heart. "Villain!" was the single interjection uttered. Yet Buckingham had then the fortitude to draw the murderous instrument from his own heart;—he would

have advanced, as if he meant to reach the assassin, but, staggering, he fell, and was caught up in the arms of his attendant. The Duchess and her sister rushed to the scene of horror—there lay their loved and ill-fated lord, bathed in his blood. All the predictions, all their long daily fears, were at length realised by a single blow from an unknown hand, at a spot and at a moment when it could have been least dreaded. The assassin might have escaped detection had he chosen it.

Thus resolutely engaged in the cause which the people had so much at heart, the blood with which Buckingham would have sealed it was shed by one of the people themselves, the enterprise designed to retrieve the national honour so long tarnished, was perhaps fatally prevented, and the Protestant cause suffered by the hand of one who imagined himself to be, and was blest by nearly the whole nation as a patriot. Such are the false appearances of things in the exaggerations of popular delusion.

The hand which struck Buckingham was not indeed guided by "a Roman spirit," though Felton mistook himself to be one, and the whole nation imagined him such. In Felton we see a man acting from mixed and confused motives. Of melancholy and solitary habits, and one of the

many officers who had brooded over disappointments both in promotion and arrears of pay, he felt a degree of personal animosity towards Buckingham. With great integrity of truth and honour, he was deservedly known by the nickname of "honest Jack." The religious enthusiasm of the times had deeply possessed his mind; and when "the Remonstrance" appeared, it acted on his imagination, as probably on many others—and he believed that the Duke was "one of the foulest monsters on earth."

A French poet, in an elegiac sonnet in the Mercure of the day, notwithstanding the war with his country, has done justice to the character of this Royal favourite. The Duke speaks:

> Et malgré ma patrie, et sa brutalité,
> J'ai fait ce qui m'a plu sur la terre, et sur l'onde.

What the rhymer meant by "the brutality" of our country, might lead to a troublesome discussion. Our neighbours were long obdurate in allowing us a reasonable proportion of that courtly elegance and refinement of manners in which Italy and France had preceded us; and of which Buckingham might have served as a model, even to the masters.

The sonneteer closes with a conceit which

contrasts the splendour of Buckingham's life with its miserable close:

> Je ne meritois pas une si belle vie,
> Ou je devois avoir une plus belle mort.

"When I struck, I felt the force of forty men in me!" exclaimed the melancholy hypochondriac. Thus, with à personal dislike to Buckingham, having conscientiously tendered four propositions to some divines, whose nugatory solutions were no impediment to what in his mind he was covertly driving at—Felton wandered about, watching his opportunity, till he struck the meditated blow.

The political martyr was entirely lost in the contrite penitent; and even Mrs. Macauly would not condescend to rank him among her republican patriots, because the Duke had not been assassinated on the right principle. Felton in his own day was considered as a being almost beyond humanity. But while the name of Felton was echoing through the kingdom, our modern Brutus was exhibiting a piteous spectacle of remorse—so different often is the real person himself from the ideal personage of the public! The assassination had been a theoretical one—depending on the four propositions Felton had submitted to his inept casu-

ists. When the King's Attorney, as the Attorney-General was then called, furnished the unhappy criminal with an unexpected argument, Felton acknowledged that he had been in an error, and his conscientious spirit sunk into despair. A long agonizing scene of contrition succeeded. Naturally brave, this "stout soldier" was seen always shedding tears. In the open court he stretched out his arm, offering it to be first cut off—he petitioned the King to wear a halter about his neck while he lived—and prayed to be allowed to ask pardon on his knees to the whole establishment of Buckingham, from the Duchess to the scullion.

Yet the name of John Felton may fill a date in the annals of our constitutional freedom. It is a bright passage in the history of this unhappy man, that when broken down in spirits and menaced with torture, he firmly asserted the rights of a Briton. When Lord Dorset told Felton that it was the King's pleasure that he should be put to the rack to make him confess his accomplices, Felton answered, "My Lord, I do not believe that it is the King's pleasure, for he is a just and gracious Prince, and will not have his subjects tortured against law. I do affirm upon my salvation, that my purpose was not known to any man living; but

if it be his Majesty's pleasure, I am ready to suffer whatever his Majesty will have inflicted upon me: yet this I must tell you by the way, that if I be put upon the rack, I will accuse you, my Lord of Dorset, and none but yourself."* This firm and sensible speech silenced the court. A council was held, the Judges were consulted, and delivered an unexpected decision, that "Felton ought not to be tortured by the rack, for no such punishment is known or allowed by our law." Thus the Judges condemned what the Government had long practised. Blackstone yields a fraternal eulogium to the honour of the Judges; but Hume more acutely discovers the cause of this sudden tenderness; "so much more exact reasoners, with regard to law, had they become from the *jealous scruples of the House of Commons.*"

* Harleian MSS. 7000, J. Mede to Sir Mat. Stuteville, Sept. 27, 1628.

CHAPTER VII.

CHARACTER OF THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

It may justly excite the surprise of the unprejudiced, that the dissipated, the prodigal, and the impetuous Buckingham should have possessed such a strong hold of the affections of the grave, the temperate, and economical Charles, and finally, should have obtained the young monarch's entire confidence in his administration. No royal favourite ever so suddenly reached to such an ascendancy in power, nor was there ever one more likely to have retained the envied position as long as his master could have maintained him there, however little the minister might have been capacitated from his inexperience and his sanguine temper to have become a great statesman.

The portrait of Buckingham is usually viewed in the caricature of a royal minion, one of those profligate men, who, reckless of all

means, concentrate their passions into one ignoble selfishness, a political monster, whom a party would send out into the wilderness with all the curses of the people on his devoted head.

It certainly was not his least crime, in the eyes of some, that Buckingham had been the permanent favourite of two monarchs, who had spoiled their child of fortune. Perhaps his greatest crime was, as Sir Henry Wotton expresses it, that "his enterprises succeeded not according to the impossible expectation of the people."

The portrait of Buckingham, by Hume, seems to me a character dove-tailed into a system adjusted to the historian's plan of lightening the errors of Charles the First, by participating them among others. Hume hits off at a single stroke a true feature, that of "his English familiarity and his French vivacity." A feature, however, is but the part of a likeness; and even a characteristic trait may conceal the more favourable, but the less obvious parts of no ordinary man. All the fascination of Buckingham's character is lost in the general shade cast over it by the niggardly commendation that "he possessed some accomplishments of a courtier." Some indeed, but not all, for dissimu-

lation and hypocrisy were arts in which this courtier was unskilled. His sweet and attractive manner, so favoured by the Graces, has been described by Sir Henry Wotton, who knew him well; and though he had a British roughness at command, which the haughty Olivarez experienced, another contemporary observes on that occasion, that "if he taunted or derided their stateliness, it must have been on provocation; or at least what he considered as such, for he was as well studied in blandishments as any courtier in Europe."

Clarendon, another living witness, when in the prime of life, as yet untouched by party anger, having no cause to advocate, and no quarrel with truth, detected a more forcible feature in the mind of Buckingham; for he tells us, "that he was the most rarely accomplished the Court had ever beheld, while some that found inconvenience in his nearness, intending, by some affront to discountenance, him, perceived *he had masked under the gentleness of a terrible courage* as could safely protect all his sweetness."

If Buckingham were indebted for his first advancement to the beauty and graces of his person; and to those lighter accomplishments which adorn the circle of a palace life, these were

adventitious circumstances, which could never have obtained an undiminished influence over the mind of Charles. The Duke must have had qualities of a better nature, to have secured the constancy of Charles's personal attachment. The inexperience of his age when the King ascended the throne, in some respect will account for the fascination; but the royal affection was never more fervent, than when Buckingham was involved in defeat and disgrace, and hunted down as a state-victim.

Had Buckingham been that creature of effeminacy, which party has represented him, or "an enemy to his country," as their declaration denounced him, could he have cherished that nobler spirit, which twice offered himself to be immolated for the glory of his sovereign, and for attracting the love of the people? This magnanimous profusion of life itself had been hitherto concealed from the world, till I discovered the Memoir of Gerbier: This, with some unpublished letters of his Duchess, which I have read, will authenticate this interesting fact. The Duke, in confidential interviews with Gerbier, repeatedly declared his solemn resolution, in his last expedition, to be "the first man who should set his foot upon the dyke before Rochelle, there to die, or do the work." In that devotion of patriotism, there was more

heroism than we now can easily imagine; for Buckingham, before his departure, as we have seen, had to resist the strange superstitions of the times, in prophesies, prognostics, and certain domestic omens, which rapidly followed one another. These had raised the terrors and the intreaties of the bigoted Countess, his mother, whose counsels had often governed him, and the bitter raillery and remonstrances of the Duchess, his wife, who in her letters ridicules the folly of courting the people, assuring him, that do whatever he would, never could he become popular. The tide of public opinion had set so strongly against the Duke, impelled by the odium which the Opposition had stuck to his name, and his own luckless fortune, that the Duchess deemed it a hopeless folly to struggle any more.

But the spirit of this favourite of two monarchs had never been dissolved in that corporeal voluptuousness which his habits indulged. We conceive him an Antinous when he would have been an Alcibiades—restless for glory, amidst splendour and power, possessed by few in the whole history of civilized ages.

In the last expedition to Rochelle, for which Buckingham had made such extraordinary preparations, and when he was so earnestly engaged in the very cause the people had so much

at heart, the blood with which Buckingham would have sealed it, was shed by one of the people themselves. The enterprise, designed to retrieve the late degraded national honour, was entirely frustrated; and the Protestant cause was fatally injured by the repentant assassin, who was imagined to be a Brutus. How many false appearances deceive us in the general page of history.

Buckingham had lofty aspirations; a spirit which was fitted to lead others by its own invincibility; a mind of quick conceptions, which an early practice in the world had sharpened, but this practice was unaccompanied by that rare judgment which is only tutored by the severities of time, and exercised by patient thought. It was his misfortune to have encountered but few obstacles in his rapid advancements, and his hardy self-will disdained to imagine any. The genius of the man was daring and magnificent, and his elocution was graceful as his manners; but these were natural talents—he possessed no acquired ones. "Had the Duke of Buckingham," observed Lord Clarendon, "been blessed with a faithful friend, the Duke would have committed as few faults, and done as transcendent worthy actions as any man in that age in Europe."

But Buckingham, with all his heedless impe-

tuosity, was by no means insensible to his deficiencies, particularly on the object of his neglected studies, and the profounder science of politics. When Lord Bacon presented the Duke with his Novum Organon in Latin, Buckingham returned his acknowledgments, lamenting his unskilfulness in the language, with a graceful elegance and vivacity of ideas, which convey a high notion of his fine talents. This consciousness of his own deficiencies is an interesting trait in his character. He was so ardent to possess that knowledge which he could not acquire by study, and that wisdom which his love of pleasure and his irregularities too frequently forbid, that he consulted every man of eminent knowledge in his peculiar department. He was importunate with the illustrious Bacon till that great man furnished him with counsels to direct him in his place of the King's Favourite. That volume of a letter has come down to us, and the curious and philosophic will look over the observations of the master-mind, who tells us that "his life hitherto had rather been contemplative than active; I have rather studied books than men; I can but guess at the most at those things in which you desire to be advised." We have, however, his practical advice, and the first he gives is, "not to trust only to

his servants, who may mislead you, or misinform you, by which they may perhaps gain a few crowns, but the reproach will lie upon yourself." Thus even the sage predicts his own fate, without suspecting the prophecy! The arrangement of his dispatches—the choice of the bishops and the judges, even of the serjeant-at-law—the privy counsellors—the conduct of foreign negotiations in the choice of ambassadors—the management of our marine, and our armies, and our trade—of our young colonies—of the King's household, and "the lords and chivalry of the court"—the planting of orchards, hop-yards, and woods, draining of lands, and the making of navigable rivers,—these are the comprehensive and curious subjects which are treated of in the philosopher's epistle. Whether Buckingham ever read the letter twice may be doubtful; we trace none of its designs attempted in the short and hurrying course he ran. In the political wisdom of the Lord-Keeper Williams, Buckingham had sought for that aid which his warm patronage had, he considered, ensured to him; and admirable advice, and prompt expedients, he often received, mingled, however, with the adulations of a courtier. But it is the misfortune of the great, however honest their de-

sire, to find, when they would be led by others, that such a servant may become the rival of his master. To direct his taste in architecture and pictures, Buckingham selected a remarkable man, Sir Balthazar Gerbier, the pupil of Rubens, and who was at once a secret agent of Government, and the inventor of his patron's magnificent masks and suppers; which reached to such a perfection of art, as to have extorted the wonder of all foreign ambassadors. Buckingham was a votary of the fine arts, for we find no less a personage than the critical and refined Wotton, at Venice, procuring pictures for the Duke, and, among others, sending over "a work of Titian's, wherein the child in the Virgin's lap playing with a bird is so round, that I know not whether I shall call it a piece of sculpture or picture, and so lively that a man would be tempted to doubt whether nature or art hath made it." Nor was Buckingham, in the munificence of his tastes, inattentive to literature, for it was he who purchased from the heirs of Erpinus a collection of Arabic manuscripts, which the University of Cambridge possesses as his gift.

The very errors and infirmities of Buckingham seem often to have started from more generous qualities. Too devoted a friend, and

too undisguised an enemy, carrying his loves and his hatreds in his open forehead; too careless of calumny, and too fearless of dangers; he was, in a word, a man of sensation, acting from impulse; scorning, indeed, prudential views, but capable, at all times, of embracing grand and original ones. He cannot be fairly accused of having been indifferent to the honour of his country, or of being an enemy to the people. Popularity, indeed, was his passion. He seriously engaged himself in the best designs, but volatile in the midst, his greatest error sprung from a sanguine spirit; a circumstance finely touched on by Sir Henry Wotton. "He was ever greedy of honour, and hot upon the public ends, but too confident in the prosperity of beginnings."

With the defects of this man's character the reader is acquainted. His temerity was flushed by insolence, and his ambition panted impatient of emulation; he would have had every man his friend, and every friend too, sensible that his enmity was terrible. In the sunshine or the lightning of his eye, men were to flourish or to fade. Loaded with that plurality of offices which rendered him odious to the public, on one occasion, as we have shown, he had generously offered to lay them down. But

so unfortunate had the expeditions to Cadiz and Rochelle proved in the hands of others, that Buckingham seemed urged rather by necessity than choice, to have retained his offices of Lord High Admiral and Commander-in-Chief, with a resolution to carry on his great objects by his own decisive exertions, and even to perish rather than to fail. But to others it seemed also that he would have conferred all the offices of the three kingdoms on his kindred and his friends, dispensing his favours, regardless of their value, and which was more mischievous to himself, of the merits of the claimants—"delighting too much in the press and affluence of dependants and suitors, who are always burrs and sometimes the briars of favourites." Thus, has that long-experienced politician, Sir Henry Wotton, observed, on the crowd who waited at the levees of this Duke, and had obtained from the people the odious distinction of the "Dukelings."

But the misery of Prime Ministers and Favourites, is a portion of their fate which has not always been noticed by their biographers. Buckingham, so sensitive to the jealousy of power, tasted all its bitterness. During his absence from England, that wily courtier, his humble friend, the Lord-Keeper Williams,

had certainly supplanted him in the favour of his Royal Master; he was turning towards the Earl of Bristol, and balancing between the old favourite, who had ceased to be one, and he who was about to become one. The mighty shadow of a greater statesman had crossed Buckingham in his path.

A piece of secret history has come down to us, which exhibits the joyous and volatile Buckingham in a situation which we could hardly have suspected in the life of this Favourite. When abroad, his confidential secretary, Dr. Mason, slept in the same chamber with the Duke. To his amazement, he then observed that at night the Duke would give way to those suppressed passions which his unaltered countenance had concealed by day. In the absence of all other ears and eyes, Buckingham would break out into the most querulous and impassioned language, declaring that "Never had dispatches to divers princes, nor the great business of a fleet, of an army, of a siege, of a treaty of war and peace, both on foot together, and all of them in his head at a time, so much broke his repose, as the idea that some at home under his Majesty, some of whom he had so well deserved, were now content to forget him." So short-lived is the gratitude observed

to an absent favourite. The opportune death of the old King saved Buckingham from the disgrace he had anticipated.

To the King and the patriotic party, Buckingham appeared in a very opposite character.

To envy, to the common passion of vulgar envy, Charles traced their personal rancour to the friend of his heart. On the expedition to Rochelle, the King accompanying the Duke to inspect the ships at Deptford, observed, "George, there are some that wish both these and thou might perish together; but care not for them, we will both perish together if thou doest." Unquestionably, such was the unchangeable determination of Charles, and Sir Robert Cotton, who was often near both the King and the Favourite, and often wisely opposed the minister without offending the master, has truly touched on the King's affection—"Certainly," Sir Robert concluded—"the King will never yield to the Duke's fall;" and then he finely characterises the youthful monarch, "being a young man resolute, magnanimous, and tenderly and firmly affectionate where he takes."* So unchange-

* A libel had been taken down from a post in Coleman-street, by order of the Lord Mayor, who sent it to his Majesty. "Who rules the kingdom? The King. Who rules

able indeed was Charles's affection for Buckingham, that he cherished his memory as warmly as his life, and designed to raise a monument to the unfortunate minister whom he called "his martyr." "The world is much mistaken in his character," said the King: "he did not govern me, but much the contrary; he has been a most faithful servant, as I will show the world." The King here alluded to his own consequent conduct; for after the death of Buckingham, there were no changes, but the King was extremely active in business. "The

the King? The Duke. Who rules the Duke? The Devil. Let the Duke look to it; for they intend shortly to unhand him worse than they did the Doctor; and if things be not shortly reformed they will work a reformation themselves." This alludes to Dr. Lambe, who was called "The Duke's Devil," an old conjuror of infamous character, whom the mob had actually torn to pieces, for which the City was imprudently fined for not delivering up the murderers.—Harleian Collection, 383, Letter 322.

Many strange stories are told of this octogenarian Pander, particularly of his intercourse with Buckingham. It is, however, a curious fact which Carte has positively given, that the person of the Old Conjuror was even unknown to the Duke. If this anecdote be true it is a striking instance of those false rumours which are kept afloat by public prejudice, till those historical calumnies become traditions. "The Duke's Devil,' after all, was no Devil of Buckingham's!

King holds in his own hands," writes Lord Dorchester, "the total direction, leaving the executory part to every man within the compass of his charge."*

For Charles, Buckingham had been the fascinating companion of his youth, and had either caught from the Prince, or had infused into his tastes, a congenial passion for those arts which were yet foreign in England, and which constituted the supreme delight of his happier hours. It is strange to observe, what however is true, that the King at no period of his reign was enabled to indulge that gorgeous magnificence in masques and banquets, in which Buckingham, expending for the evening from one to five thousand pounds, entertained the court. And Buckingham too was the man on whose commanding spirit the young sovereign fondly rested the prosperity and even the glory of his reign; for Buckingham had frequently boasted that "he would make Charles the greatest monarch in Europe." What "the greatest" meant in this courtier's vocabulary we may easily conceive.

The pacific reign of James had dimmed the glory of our country in the eyes of foreigners,

* Sloane MSS. 4178, Letter 519.

with whom we are never great, unless we are fighting their battles, and confederating for their interests. The Machiavels of foreign cabinets will look with contempt on the domestic blessings which a British sovereign would scatter among his subjects, and his presence with the foreigner is only felt in his armies. The new reign had opened with enterprise, and the glory of our arms was now to reinstate the nation in its military character; but a peace of twenty years had rusted the arms of our soldiers, and most of our commanders were unskilled in the art of war. Buckingham had indeed triumphed in the rivalry of courtly grandeur with the other two mighty statesmen, who were conducting the fortunes of Europe, in the persons of their young sovereigns; but the completion of his views was to be reached by a more daring spirit. To the romantic and spirited Prince it seemed a generous ambition, a conflict for national honour, at home and abroad; and the Duke who had wrestled with the awful ministers of Spain and France, felt not the less a passion for popularity, spurning at life to obtain it from the people of England. Charles then, while he more intimately knew and admired the dazzling qualities of his friend, with an eye of youth and affection, was yet un-

practised in discerning the shades of ambiguous virtues; and the King seems never to have suspected that the resolute but ill-regulated spirit of his favourite was more likely to plunge him into many fatal efforts, than able to extricate him from them.

The virtues of a man who cannot be deemed virtuous; the talents of a man who so frequently was mortified to discover their incompetence; and the resolutions of a man to acquire popularity who never was popular, are the paradoxical qualities which may instruct us in the very interesting character of the Favourite of Charles the First, who had in vain attempted to become the Favourite of the world!

Had Buckingham escaped from the knife of the assassin, he would most probably have preceded Strafford and Laud to the scaffold. He was not that spiritless and corrupt Favourite who could have crept into obscurity.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF ROYAL FAVOURITES.

THE fate of the Duke of Buckingham enters into the history of ROYAL FAVOURITES; but histories of royal Favourites consist only of satires and invectives, or, if they aspire to the dignity of a narrative, present but a shapeless mass, put together by those who collect every thing and discern nothing. The subject, however, forms a chapter in the history of man, and political sagacity may yet unravel some truths out of the complicated knots and twistings of prejudice and passion.

We perpetually find accounts of royal Favourites, and it is sufficient to have been one, to incur the condemnation of historians, too apt to echo the cries of the past. Those monsters, or ministers, are sometimes exhibited as remorseless criminals, or wretches dissolved in wanton corruption. It is difficult to conceive how kings can be so insensible to their

own interests, as voluntarily to choose such inept beings for Favourites; but we are still more surprised when we discover the activity of these men, who having obtained all things by favouritism, without a solitary talent, or an obscure virtue, still like other men who have a name to create, and a career of glory to run, pursue life agitated by the same hopes, and mindful of the same labours. How did it happen that the dissolute or the trifler quitted the bed of roses on which he slumbered? The Favourite who fills a space in history, who was the object of contemporary hatreds, and who still furnishes the declaimer with invectives, however his enterprises may have succeeded, or may have failed, is a distinct personage from the minion of caprice who remains buried in his own inglorious obscurity. Attached to the household, the name of the latter personage rarely appears, his actions—never. We may therefore suspect, whenever we discover any one of these royal Favourites prominent in history, that his spirit was of another cast than it appears in this disguise of favouritism, and that he aimed at being something more than a royal Favourite.

It would not be difficult to show that some have had the misfortune of being royal Favourites who have not been what is called

in party-writing, " wicked Ministers ;" and that others whom we would not eulogise, have notwithstanding, betrayed some redeeming public virtues. Many Favourites have been given up as a concession to the public voice, and what was hardly to be expected, from the very jealousy the Favourite had excited in the breast of his royal Master. If Elizabeth feared the greatness of the heroic Essex, we should not be surprised that James the First became alarmed at the influence of Buckingham. The lamentation of Wolsey has been repeated by several fallen ministers much in the same words. Louis the Thirteenth was visibly jealous of all his favourites, from his first, Luynes, whom he bitterly nicknamed " the King," to Cardinal Richelieu, whom he felt he could only obey, and not command. The gratitude of kings is often an ambiguous virtue—it is always an uncertain one.

A royal favourite, whatever he may be, has the two great divisions of mankind arrayed in hostility against him: the great, into which class he has been obtruded; and the obscure, which he has for ever abandoned—and still his most formidable enemy has usually been found in himself. Many have been torn to pieces by the triumphant people ; for whether the unhappy man be a Sejanus, a Marshal d'Ancre, or the Pensionary

De Witt, the populace in every age, agitated by the same hatred of the abuses of power, imagine that they are satiating their vengeance in the single State-victim which has been cast out to them. We may, however, be struck by this curious fact, that there is hardly one of these renowned favourites but has found an unimpassioned apologist: and on a calmer investigation than their contemporaries were capable of exercising, they have been considerably exculpated from the errors or the crimes imputed to them; and some better designs have been manifested in these contemned men, than the passions of their enemies could discover.

The memorable fate of the Marshal d'Ancre and his lady, the Italian favourites of Mary de Medicis, is a striking instance of the terrific malignity of popular rage, even on insignificant characters. The single passion of D'Ancre was inordinate avarice; he gorged on wealth; but no act of oppression had marked the career of this grasping Florentine: it is not known that he had any personal enemy, while his obliging temper had secured many friends. The Marechalle was a superior genius; and her famous reply, when on her trial for witchcraft, was dignified and great. "By what magic," she was interrogated, "had she obtained such an ascendancy

over the Queen-Mother?" — "By no other magic," she replied, "than that power which a firm spirit possesses over a weak mind." After D'Ancre's assassination, the mutinous populace, furious as a herd of maddened elephants, unburied his corpse, burnt his heart, sold his flesh by pieces, and his ashes by the ounce, and cast his remains into the river. Never did human being suffer so much for being an Italian, and for growing too opulent in France. Marshal D'Etrees, in his Memoirs of the Regency, though on the side of the French Princes in opposition to Mary of Medicis, could not avoid expressing his astonishment at these horrid circumstances, and on the public execution of the Marechalle—he acknowledged the D'Ancres' general benevolence, and that personally they had few, if any, enemies. He ascribes the singular and undeserved catastrophe of the family of the D'Ancres to Fate; but another cause, more obvious, was the monstrous libels which his party had heaped on these royal favourites, by which they had rendered them hateful to the people; and as Marshal D'Etrees was the ablest writer of his party, the surprise he felt and the enormities which he describes, shrewdly observes the historian of Louis the Thirteenth, was in great part his own work.*

* Père Griffet, Hist. de France, xiii. 196.

The immortal chisel of Tacitus has sculptured the colossal statue of a royal Favourite. The characteristics, the manners, and the principle of action of this species of personage, may be detected in the Sejanus of history. But who was Sejanus himself? Tacitus is the most awful genius whom the Muse of history has ever inspired, but he contemplates on human nature in masses. In the ideal of this master, the portrait resembles life; but we may suspect that, placed by the side of the living original, the portrait might have lost in truth what it had gained in effect. The monster-minister of Tacitus appears more naturally human in the portrait of Velleius Paterculus, whose personal knowledge has preserved for us a dignified characteristic of the man.* Place this by the side

* All the critics repeat after one another that Velleius has disgraced himself by his adulation of this model of all unpopular ministers. They cannot imagine that any single feature of humanity can form a part of their political phantom. The charm of a brilliant style may seem that of courtly panegyric; but allowing for the times, the writer, and the minister, he must possess little knowledge of human nature who does not discern some personal strokes which betray the intimacy of the writer. Velleius describes Sejanus as a person well adapted for his laborious office. "A vast frame was joined with as vigorous an intellect. His severity was often enlivened by the old Roman plea-

of the important confession of Tacitus himself—that while this minister lived, he repressed the dark passions of Tiberius; and further, that the extinction of this State-victim afforded no relief to the Commonwealth, since, for many years after, the master continued the system of his condemned servant; and we may be induced to ask with Juvenal,

> Sed quo cecidit sub crimine? quisnam
> Delator? quibus indiciis? quo teste probavit?
> Nil horum?
>
> But, tell me, why was he adjudged to bleed?
> And who discovered? And who proved the deed?
> Nothing of this?

If the administration of Sejanus were not his own, but his master's, this royal Favourite, flattered by a greater dissembler than himself, was probably one of those mighty machines of tyranny which are used till no longer serviceable. How skilfully at times Sejanus interposed between the people and the passions of their tyrant, is at least hinted at by the great historian. Sejanus perished, for he found a

santry: in the midst of business, he seemed like one at leisure; ascribing nothing to himself, he obtains every thing from all, and his countenance and his life are as tranquil as his genius is vigilant."

jealous master. But RICHELIEU in France, and POMBAL in Portugal,—there are those who would add PITT in England,—actuated by the same principle of a severe administration, have been considered as the greatest statesmen of modern Europe. Richelieu, by many an immolation, saved his country from intestine wars, and trode down an aspiring aristocracy of Princes; his genius survived him in the glory of the future reign. Pombal, anticipating the spirit of our own century, with no other aid than his own philosophical fortitude, doomed the extinction of the Jesuits, and established the commerce of the country; nor could the stability of his designs be interrupted by a conspiracy which menaced the throne, and an earthquake which shook his metropolis into ruins, and persuaded the people that Heaven warred against the Minister. But the towns of France were turned into garrisons by the despotic Richelieu, and the dungeons of Lisbon were enlarged by the inexorable Pombal. These are ministers whose administrations only differed from that of the Sejanus of Tiberius, in the character of their sovereigns. But Sejanus himself, had there been a free press at Rome, could not have been rendered more odious by a swarm of satires and libels than were

these two great statesmen. Whenever there happens a crisis in the fortunes of an empire, and a minister is compelled to adopt a cruel administration, he cannot escape from the hatreds of his contemporaries.

An opposite species of royal Favourites has attracted the partialities of their sovereigns by their agreeable qualities, insinuating themselves into the affections of their prince, perhaps by accident, and often for trivial or unworthy purposes. But were they only puppets to amuse their prince? Piers Gaveston, the playmate of Edward II., has always been condemned as a dissolute minion. We know but imperfectly those times, when the historians were as barbarous as the events they record, and when the nation was divided between conspiring barons and a murderous adulteress. Yet of this person, whom his enemies have made infamous in history, we should form a very erroneous notion, if we cannot discriminate truth amidst passion and prejudice. This young Gascon possessed many interesting qualities; he was loved by many; nor have his generous nature and brilliant genius been concealed by his imprudent contempt of jealous nobles, whom he stung by his wit, and foiled by his lance: he might have gained them by

his favours. Their vengeance was an act more criminal than any he had committed in his life. Much that age owed to his elegant accomplishments; and the six years of his administration softened the warlike barbarism of the day, and opened the polished chivalry of a happier reign.* Luynes became a similar favourite with Louis the Thirteenth. He had taught the young Prince the art of bird-catching. After the assassination of the Marshal D'Ancre, the *protégé* of the Queen-Mother, Luynes rapidly ascended to favour. As Minister and Constable of France he excited the indignation of the nation—in all probability, chiefly the indignation of the nobility. But are we to imagine that "King Luynes," as Louis the Thirteenth himself had nicknamed him, was only dexterous at liming speckled magpies? He had caged his sovereign—and large was his aviary. The man who could retain his administration shaken by so many powerful factions, we may be assured practised

* Turner's History of England, ii. 128. Mr. Turner has skilfully collected the more interesting particulars of Gaveston. The reader may be amused at "the contumacious nicknames by which he taunted the haughty nobility." They are evidence of the wanton wit and poignant pleasantry for which Gascony was long famed.

deeper arts than those of a bird-catcher. He triumphed over all, and oppressed none; he was prodigal to his friends,—a certain means to make enemies. As a French statesman, he first opened a war, however then unsuccessful, with the Huguenots; a system which the great politician Richelieu continued, and which in the end subdued that "ambitious sect," as they are called in French history. Could such a man as Luynes have been destitute of talents and all good qualities? But we must not expect to discover a single one in that heap of satires and lampoons which accompany his name.* Posterity must decide by the acts of this favourite, who though envied or detested, the impartiality of time acknowledges to have rendered important services to his sovereign.

Thus two contemptible royal favourites ap-

* These are collected in a considerable volume; "Recueil des pièces les plus curieuses qui ont été fait pendant la faveur du Connêtable de Luynes, en 1619, 1620, et 1621"—1623. They consist of prose and verse.—A compiler of modern history describes Luynes as "equally ignorant and presumptuous," on his unsuccessful attack of Montauban. He died of a fever in the camp. But a man may be "ignorant and presumptuous," particularly if he fail in a great enterprise, yet the enterprise itself may indicate no want of wisdom or courage.

pear to have been very different men from those which the popular impressions had received of them.

"But sovereigns should have no favourites!" is the universal cry. A learned historian of stoical morals observes that "Judicious friendship is honourable and beneficial to the throne; favouritism implies imbecility." Such is the abstract counsel of a sage! And whenever man ceases to be a bundle of sympathies, and tastes, and passions, some patriot king, in the apathy of his philosophy, may easily distinguish the rigid line which for ever separates friendship from favouritism. But till the day arrives of the perfectibility of man, we can only consider this advice as offered on the principle by which medical men usually warn their unhappy invalids—"to be careful not to eat heartily of what they like best."

Kings, in their peculiar situation, must always remain uncertain whether they inspire the sympathy which some monarchs would rejoice to create. The throne for ever stands between the monarch and his friend. Unhappy sovereigns! denied participating in the devotion of friendship and the adoration of love! There can be no friendship where there is no equality; and what female ever loved the object of her

fear? Louis XV. imagined that he possessed the tranquillity of domestic privacy in the love of Madame de Pompadour; but when all the arts of cajolery were exhausted, alarmed at her declining influence, the Marchioness gladly sunk the warmer claim into that of an useful friend. Monarchs must descend from their throne to find a friend or a lover; and it is only by their magnanimity in adversity that they can kindle the social affections in their companions. Charles the First possessed more devoted friends in the days of his sorrows than he ever found when on his throne.

But a prince must have a Favourite, since he can have no friend; and one of the greatest difficulties has been often acknowledged in supplying this want. A piece of secret history will show us the critical niceties of the providers of royal favourites. Once when the Marshal d'Ancre and his lady, in a secret conference with Mary of Medicis, had alarmed her on the growing favour which her son, the young Louis XIII. had bestowed on his companion De Luynes, it was resolved to remove the favourite from Court, and by renewed attention to the amusements of the youthful Monarch, prevent him from feeling his loss. When the plan was arranged, the Marshal suddenly observed

that Sauveterre, the King's first valet, and usher of the Queen, stood at the door, and had probably overheard their State conversation. The Marshal, as an expedient, politically proposed to admit him to their councils; he was the friend of De Luynes. The Queen-Mother then confided to Sauveterre her inquietude at the ascendancy of his friend over her son; and that either her Majesty or the Favourite must retire. "In that extreme case," observed Sauveterre, "it is necessary that my friend should be sacrificed.—But, Madam," he continued, "when you have got rid of this favourite, have you thought of one to supply his place? The King must have his companion; and if his Majesty should choose one more enterprising and more elevated in rank, you may repent of having removed this man, of whose conduct you are more certain than of any successor." This difficulty had not occurred to the D'Ancres: they were embarrassed—they examined the merits of a great number; but, after long deliberation, they could fix on no person who was not objectionable; and at length it was agreed that they should leave De Luynes as the King's favourite, till they were able to find out the proper man for his substitute.

The fears of the D'Ancres were not imagi-

nary; the Italians were more odious to the French people. Even the Prince of Condé, father to the great Condé, offered to assassinate the Florentine with his own hand. The Marshal, however, perished by the command of the favourite De Luynes, who acted under the auspices of the young King.

The greatest sovereigns, as well as the weakest, have ever required some partner in the state, to alleviate its burthens; to inspire their hopes, and to guide their fortunes. Hence Wolsey, Leicester, Walpole, and Bute, were the royal favourites of monarchs who cannot be classed among ordinary princes. But this class of favourites, as well as those of a more capricious choice, have excited the same unpardoning envy of the people, by their immense wealth and power. Sovereigns who flatter themselves that in a favourite they have found a friend, charmed even by this illusion of natural feeling, usually dispense their favours royally, destitute of all calculating arts; and Osborn, an old courtier, observes, with great knowledge of the royal character, "All the kings I have known were found to do more for their Favourites than they could be tempted to have done for themselves." The favourites themselves are acted on by their locality; seduced by power, and

corrupted by office, family pride covers itself with titles as substitutes for ancestral nobility, and palaces are built by subjects. The public odium of private fortunes gathered from the common weal is attached to the favourite, and his tribes of relatives and friends who flocked at the call, are counted over till factions are formed, and sedition has often triumphed.

This is the history of man as much as of Favourites. Man is a corruptible creature. Even patriotic statesmen have been disgraced by the passion of avarice, which with them is connected with the more elevated feeling of ambition. Sully, who may be distinguished as the friend rather than the favourite of his King, did not serve himself with less zeal than he served his country; and this severe minister having amassed vast possessions, when he left his public station, retreated into a princely life. Clarendon in place, after that long abstinence from power, when he often wanted the price of a dinner, was as a famished man in office. He sullied his hands by the most ordinary corruptions; and there is every reason to believe, that a wider grasp built Clarendon House, which was better known under the more popular names of Dunkirk House, or Tangier Hall. In the history of Walpole, we must not omit Houghton and family sinecures.

One of the great odiums cast on favourites, arises from what no disguise can conceal from the people's view—the elevation of a whole family and its multitude of creatures. The people, as one of them observed in revolutionary times, need care little who are in administration, since whoever they are, still the people must work; but the great families in the state, thus thrown out of power, find it no difficult art to convince the discontented, that every public grievance may be traced to the prosperity of the favourite and his countless dependents.

In our political history, we observe the alarm spread by party against the Hyde family,* and the Bute ministry.†

* The bitterness of the wit of a lampoon on Lord Clarendon, which I recovered from its manuscript state, will show how a political family is treated by their contemporaries. It turns on the family name of the Clarendons.

When Queen Dido landed, she bought as much ground
As the *Hyde* of a lusty fat bull would surround;
But when the said *Hyde* was cut into thongs,
A city and kingdom to *Hyde* belongs;
So here in court, church, and country, far and wide,
Here 's nought to be seen but *Hyde! Hyde! Hyde!*
Of old, and where law the kingdom divides,
'Twas our *Hydes of Land*, 'tis now *Land of Hydes!*

† The caricatures relative to Lord Bute's favouritism and Scottish patronage have been collected into volumes, and

The case of the Duke of Lerma, the favourite of Philip III. of Spain, will illustrate this point in the history of royal Favourites. On his entrance into power, this minister resolved that his nation, after the long struggle with the new republic, should repose in peace: he hastened a peace with England on the best conditions he could procure, and concluded a truce with Holland, which secured her independence. During an administration of twenty years, the pacific Favourite courted all classes. To conceal the embarrassed state of the finances, he amused his master with festivals, and instead of suppressing a vast number of useless offices, which the caprice of the preceding reign had created, fearful of raising up enemies, he increased the evil, by making additional ones for his friends. His administration was a contrivance of expedients, and his perpetual hope lay in the galleons of Mexico, which have always kept down the national industry. The Duke of Lerma's mode of conducting affairs is curiously described by Sir Charles Cornwallis, our ambassador in Spain. The Duke deferred an appointment with him, till his return from the Escurial, which visit occupied the minister

they may be accompanied by shelves of libels and pasquinades, as well as by Churchill's satire.

three or four months: "he deferred business in the winter, and absolutely hid himself from it in the summer." But this Favourite had his own Favourite; and to supply his own mediocrity of genius, he had fixed on a man of active talents.

The Duke was hated by the people; not that any one complained of injustice or severity in his lenient government, but the people could not forgive the pride with which he had received the King at his own house! The favourite was cried down, calumniated, retired with disgrace, and even deprived of fortune, and his secretary lost his head. It was pretended that he had sacrificed the national glory to this system of tranquillising the world. His fall was so rapid as to appear sudden:—all the Lermates disappeared in a few days.

At the fall of the Duke of Lerma, which occasioned so many removals from office, our James the First, expressing his astonishment, inquired the cause of his facetious friend Gondomar. That Cervantic Spaniard replied, by applying an apologue with his usual poignancy. To illustrate the fall of the Duke and his creatures, he told, how once two rats, having entered a palace, were delighted at the spacious apartments, and the frequent banquets. They whisked

about unmolested, every day seemed a festival, and they at last concluded that the palace was built for them. Their presence was not even suspected. But, grown bolder by custom, they called in shoals of rats and ratlings, and each filled his appointment. Some were at the larder, some in the dining-room, some here, and some there. The little rapacious creatures were a race of lascivious livers; they dipped their whiskers in every dish, and nibbled at the choicest morsels. Not a department but had its rat. The people in the palace began now to cry out, that there were rats without number; and having once made up their minds as to the fact, THEY LAID TRAPS FOR THEM, HERE AND THERE, AND CAST RATSBANE UP AND DOWN THE PALACE.

CHAPTER IX.

SECRET HISTORY OF THE QUEEN'S HOUSEHOLD, AND OF THE ATTEMPT TO ORGANISE A FRENCH AND CATHOLIC FACTION IN THE ENGLISH COURT.

CHARLES the First, at this early period of his reign, had not only to encounter the troubles of his Parliament, the disaffection of the people excited by his financial difficulties, and the anxieties attendant on his military expeditions; but even his own household opened for him a long scene of mortification, such as has rarely been exhibited under the roofs of the palace of the sovereign.

Charles and Henrietta had met in youthful love; ardent and heartfelt had been their first embrace; but the design and results of a POLITICAL MARRIAGE could not long be concealed, and their personal happiness was soon not in their own power to command.

Henrietta, among her French household, forgot her endearing entreaty to Charles, which

had so gracefully opened her lips on her arrival, that "he would ever himself, and by no third person, correct her faults of ignorance, youthful and a stranger as she was." In thanking her, the young Monarch desired that "she would use him as she had desired him to use her."

But Henrietta had the whole French Cabinet invisibly operating on her conduct. Her mother, the Dowager of France, and her brother, the Monarch, flattered their hopes that a ductile princess of sixteen might serve as an instrument to maintain the predominance of the French interest in the English Court, nor does the English King appear to have been insensible to their attempt. It is only by entering into the domestic privacies of these royal personages, that we can do justice to Charles in a dilemma equally delicate and difficult.

Of this political marriage, as of so many others, we may detect the secret motives of an union of adverse interests.

No one, I think, has noticed the character of the French ambassadors who were sent immediately after the marriage. Every ambassador sent by France was acting under the councils of the Louvre to influence the Queen. The Count de Tillières, who had first come over

here as Chamberlain to Henrietta, and was afterwards appointed ambassador, was dismissed with the rest of the French; and Charles sent an express prohibition to Tillières, that he should not presume to set foot on English shore to be near her Majesty, for that "he would no longer suffer his sworn servant to be checkmate with him."*

De Tillières was succeeded by the Marquis de Blainville, whom we find keeping up a secret intercourse with the Queen and her numerous establishment. His official capacity was favourable to this disguised *espionage;* and his conduct here was such as to have incurred the peremptory refusal of Charles to allow his admittance to the presence either of the Queen or himself.

One of the objects of the mission of De Blainville was to remonstrate on the protection which the English Court afforded to Soubise.

But De Blainville had other important objects, and Charles was aware of them. Our acute English commentator on Bassompierre's journal of his short embassy to the English Court, in alluding to Father Sancy's conduct, one of her Majesty's political attendants, ob-

* Sloane MSS.

serves, that " one is surprised to find the English Court so early and so well apprised of this man's mission, as it appears they were."* The fact is, that Charles had no careless intelligencers at the French Court. Larkin was an active agent of the Duke's; and before De Blainville's arrival in England, his designs had been detected, and Larkin had anticipated his views. He had watched closely for them, and two dark speeches of the Queen-Mother and the Cardinal were for some time riddles hard to unriddle, but he succeeded by the open confession of the Duke de Chevreux. " De Blainville comes," says Larkin, " to spy and discover what he can, and, according as he shall find cause, to frame cabals and factions, whereunto he is esteemed very proper, being characterised with the marks of a most subtle, prying, penetrating, and dangerous man."*

At that time, it was the usage for ambassadors to be maintained at the expense of the Court, who provided them with house, diet, and even post-horses; and the ambassadors, on their return home, left the marks of their liberality, or their parsimony, in gratuities to the

* Cabala, fo. 320.

Master of the Ceremonies and other attendants. This absurd custom was productive of perpetual jealousies on the side of the ambassadors, and at length was found so inconvenient at the Exchequer, that Charles was compelled in his distresses to curtail, and finally, to refuse this established mode of royal reception. De Blainville, from the moment of his arrival insisted, on being lodged in the King's Palace, and had reverted to some precedent as far back as the reign of Elizabeth; but Charles firmly objected to any foreign ambassador residing so close to him. De Blainville was ever on the watch to make what, in the style of the Master of the Ceremonies, is called "an exception;" that is, an allegation of something irregular in etiquette; and this French ambassador proved the most troublesome of guests to the hapless Master of the Ceremonies. Vaunting his high rank at his own Court, as *Monsieur le premier*, the first Gentleman of the Chamber, and his own great means, he threatened to refuse his Majesty's diet, and live at his own cost. This seemed tantamount to a proclamation of war to the urbane Master of the Ceremonies, who in his curious diary has registered these "stomachous speeches" with great indignation, and some tre-

pidation. This wayward guest drove poor Sir John Finet to many a cruel shift to allow the ambassador, as a private person, what, if acknowledged to have been granted to him in his public capacity, might have become, that most serious of solemn affairs in the eyes of a Master of the Ceremonies—a precedent!

How De Blainville occupied himself here, was doubtless not unobserved; but the best accounts of an ambassador's secret proceedings will usually come from the other side of the water. In a confidential dispatch of the Earl of Holland at Paris, our Minister was informed of what he could not himself have so well discovered. "I must tell your Grace, that by a friend whom I am tied not to name, I was showed the private letter that Blainville wrote to the King, in the which he sent him the whole proceedings of the Parliament, and concludes they will ruin you, naming great factions against you."*

De Blainville was evidently exerting an undue influence over the Queen, and sometimes outwitted the most correct arrangements of Sir John Finet. Once, on the removal of the Court, and the Queen staying behind, the Marquis's train of coaches and attendants having

* Cabala, p. 252.

also set off, and all being prepared for the Marquis's stepping into his own carriage, at this instant he called for the Master of the Ceremonies to confide to him the important secret, that he should stay behind—"pour se purger, as he professed"—a stratagem for his greater freedom of access to the Queen! His mysterious intercourse became evident, and one day, when the King was going to Parliament, a difference arising between Charles and the Queen about the place where she was to stand, De Blainville was discovered to have occasioned her Majesty's obstinacy. From that moment the ambassador was forbidden any farther access to their Majesties. The Frenchman stormed, and required an audience; Charles replied, that "If he demanded an audience for any business of the King his master, it should be readily granted; but if it was to expostulate about his own grievances, His Majesty refused to see him." The ambassador replied, that he was here for the King his master, and not for himself; the audience, therefore, referred to the person represented, and not to the representative. On the following day, dispatching couriers, and refusing the King's diet, he prepared for his departure. His imperious conduct had often excited the indignation of the

mob: the ambassador was assaulted in his house; and the Master of the Ceremonies notes down, that "the Marquis de Blainville was reputed to be the main *bontefeu* of our war with France." He has made a lamentable entry in his diary: "the Marquis, after all the vaunts of his own great means, seemed to prefer his ill-humour, for he left the King's officers and servants, (myself in particular, after my so long and painful attendance) ill-satisfied with his *none at all*, or most unworthy acknowledgments."

By the marriage contract, Henrietta was to be allowed a household establishment composed of her own people. As this arrangement was made during the life of James, it was limited to one hundred and twenty persons, in her state as a Princess of Wales. The French afterwards pleaded for an increased establishment for her rank as the Queen of England.* Thus they gradually contrived to form nothing less than a small French colony, and by a private account, it is said to have branched out, with their connexions, to about four hundred persons. This French party was forming a little republic within themselves; a political faction among them was furnishing intelligence

* Mercure Français, xii. 224.

to their own ambassadors, and spreading rumours in an intercourse with the English malecontents; while the French domestics, engaged in lower intrigues, were lending their names to hire houses in the suburbs, where, under their protection, the English Catholics found a secure retreat to hold their illegal assemblies, and where the youth of both sexes were educated and prepared to be sent abroad to Catholic seminaries. The Queen's palace was converted into a place of security for the persons and papers of every fugitive.

They had not long resided here, ere the mutual jealousies between the two nations broke out. All the English who were not Catholics were soon dismissed from their attendance on the Queen, by herself; while Charles was impelled, by the popular cry, to forbid British Catholics serving the Queen, or even to be present at the celebration of her mass. Pursuivants would stand at the door of the Queen's chapel to seize on any of the English who entered, while, on these occasions, the French would draw their swords to defend the concealed Romanists. "The Queen and Hers," became an odious distinction with the people; and what seems not improbable, the Papists, presuming on the pro-

tection which the late marriage seemed to afford them, frequently passed through the churches during divine service, "hooting and hallooing." A Papist Lord, when the King was at chapel, is accused "of prating on purpose louder when the chaplain prayed," till the King sent his message, "either let him come and do as we do, or else I will make him prate farther off." Such were the indecent scenes exhibited in public; in private they were, of course, less reserved.

Those who have pourtrayed the Queen as displaying an ascendancy over the political conduct of Charles the First, must at least acknowledge that she had not become a politician by any previous studies, or any disposition towards deep councils. Henrietta first conducted herself as might have been rather expected, than excused, in an inconsiderate Princess of sixteen; and exhausted her genius and her temper in the frivolous interests of her bed-chamber-ladies and her household appointments.

Henrietta yielded herself wholly to her confessor, Père Berulle, afterwards Cardinal, who was soon succeeded by a more offensive character in Father Sancy. The genius of Catholicism is that of Proselytism; for of that Church, out of whose pale there is no salvation,

it is charity to inveigle every human soul to enter, and pious frauds or a more terrific force are alike sanctioned by the only true Church. The Queen, in her zeal, obtruded her papistical ceremonies on the observations of her Protestants. Even at a later period, I find by a Roman Catholic manuscript, that "on a certain fast-day, the Queen being with child, and refusing to eat flesh, even at the King's request, his Majesty desired the French ambassador to procure a licence from the Roman Catholic Bishop of Calcedon, who, the King knew, lay hid in his house," notwithstanding that a proclamation had been issued against him. This is one more evidence, had any been wanting, of that royal connivance with which James and Charles frequently indulged their Roman Catholics, at the moment they were compelled, by some public remonstrance, openly to put the penal laws in force against them.

Henrietta indeed, as we have seen, on her first arrival, had affected to disregard her ghostly confessor. This piece of acting was probably a French lesson, retained for the moment, but it was never got by heart. The Queen's priests, by those well-known means which the Roman religion sanctions, were drawing, it was alleged, from the Queen the minutest circum-

stances which passed in privacy between her and the King. They indisposed her mind against her royal consort; they impressed on her a contempt for the English nation; and as was long usual with our egotistical neighbours, they induced her to neglect the English language, as if the Queen of England held no common interest with the nation. Yet all this seemed hardly more offensive than the humiliating state to which they had reduced an English Queen by their monastic obedience. The ascetic austerities of Catholicism, in its daily practices, had occasioned the death of a female of distinction among her attendants, who, on her death-bed, had complained of such rigid penances.

On the Queen they had inflicted the most degrading or the most ridiculous penances and mortifications. Her Majesty was seen walking barefoot, or spinning at certain hours, and performing menial offices. She even waited on her own domestics; but the most notorious was her Majesty's pilgrimage to Tyburn, to pray under the gallows of those Jesuits who, executed as traitors to Elizabeth and James, were by the Catholics held as martyrs of faith. This incident Bassompierre, in the style of the true French gasconade, declared that "those

who formed the accusation did not themselves believe." The fact however seems not doubtful; I find it confirmed by private accounts of the times, and afterwards sanctioned by a State paper.

Priestly indiscretion was perpetually exploding. Once, when the King and Queen were dining together in the Presence,* Hacket being to say grace, the Queen's confessor would have anticipated him, and an indecorous race was run between the Catholic priest and the Protestant chaplain, till the latter shoved him aside, and the King pulling the dishes to him, the carvers performed their office. Still the confessor, standing by the Queen, was on the watch to be before Hacket for the after-grace; but Hacket again got the start. The Confessor, however, resounded his grace louder than the chaplain, and the King, in great passion, instantly rose, taking the Queen by the hand.

When Henrietta was unexpectedly delivered of an infant, which afterwards died, the Popish priest ran forwards, but the King insisted that the royal infant should be baptized by an

* There is a curious picture of Charles and Henrietta dining in the Presence, which may be seen at Hampton Court.

English clergyman. A ludicrous anecdote has come down to us, respecting the birth of the Duke of York, afterwards James the Second. The nurse being a Roman Catholic, Sir John Tunstone offered the oath of allegiance. She refusing, they tampered with the nurse to convert her. This threw her into a fright, and spoilt her milk; the infant suffered. They then resolved to change her, but the Queen was so evidently affected at the proposal, that it was considered necessary for her own health and the nurse's breast, to pass over in silence the oath of allegiance.

One of the articles in the contract of marriage was, that the Queen should have a chapel at St. James's, to be built, and consecrated by the French bishop. The priests became very importunate, declaring that without a chapel mass could not be performed with the state required before a Queen. The King's answer at this moment, as it is mentioned in a letter of the times, betrayed no respect for Popery. "If the Queen's closet, where they now say mass, is not large enough, let them have it in the great chamber, but if the great chamber is not wide enough, they might use the garden, and if the garden would not serve their turn, then was the Park the fittest place."

Such was the state of mutual displeasure! The French priests and the whole party slighted, and sometimes worse treated, were wearying others, as they themselves were wearied. To English notions, there was something ludicrous in the person of a lively juvenile Bishop, hardly of age, whose authority was but irreverently treated by two beautiful viragos, Madame St. George and another Lady of the Bed-chamber, in a civil war of words. The young Bishop, however, became a more serious personage in his eager contests with the Earl of Holland, about the stewardship of the manors which had been settled on the Queen for her jointure, that office being conferred on the Earl by the King, while the French Bishop claimed it by a grant from her Majesty.

In the marriage treaty, many points had been arranged, with small attention to their nature. The French had secured the dower of Henrietta, in case of the death of the King; but they afterwards discovered that her revenue or jointure during the King's life being a custom unknown to France, had been omitted. This, therefore, though not refused, led to questions whether a Frenchman or an Englishman should be the receiver.

Bluster and broils, chatter and clamour, were

never ceasing in this troubled French household in an English palace. Madame St. George, her former governess, who stood paramount in the graces of the Queen, was most intolerably hated by the English. Vivacious and high-spirited, she stood on the perpetual watch to claim her right of place as first Lady of Honour to the Queen. In the full dignity of office, she would thrust herself into the royal carriage, seizing on that seat as her due; which it appears, by De Brienne's Memoirs, was her due, according to the French appointments. She insisted on this, in preference to the English Ladies of higher rank. From the carriage she was once repulsed by the King's own hand, and never was Charles forgiven! notwithstanding the blandishment of his munificent presents when he dismissed the lady.

The custom in France of purchasing appointments in the Royal Household, which some did with all their means, seemed a monstrous anomaly to Charles; nor would he submit to a foreign regulation, which forced on him domestics who were nominated by his brother of France. The unhappy foreigners passed their days in jealousies and bickerings among themselves, which exposed them to the ridicule of their sarcastic neighbours. We

smile at the dispatches of the Ambassador Extraordinary, this great mediator between two Kings and a Queen, addressed to the minister of France, acknowledging that "the greatest obstacle in this most difficult negotiation, proceeded from the bed-chamber women!" for Marshal Bassompièrre found more trouble to make these ladies agree, than to accommodate the differences between the two monarchs.

A year had not elapsed, when we find Charles himself opening his griefs to the French Monarch; he complains of the difficulty of access to the Queen; he is compelled "to manage her servants" to obtain an interview. The King has described her conduct in a very particular manner, in regard to her revenue. "One night, when I was a-bed, she put a paper in my hand, telling me it was a list of those that she desired to be of her revenue. I took it, and said I would read it next morning; but withal told her, that by agreement in France, I had the naming of them. She said there were both English and French in the note. I replied, that those English I thought fit to serve her I would confirm; but for the French, it was impossible for them to serve her in that nature. Then she said, all those in the paper had breviates from her mother and herself, and that she

would admit no other. Then I said, that it was neither in her mother's power nor hers to admit any without my leave, and if she stood upon that, whomsoever she recommended should not come in. Then she bade me plainly take my lands to myself, for if she had no power to put in whom she would in those places, she would have neither lands nor houses of me, but bade me give her what I thought fit in pension. I bade her then remember to whom she spoke, and told her that she ought not to use me so. Then she fell into a passionate discourse, how she is miserable, in having no power to place servants; and that businesses succeeded the worse for her recommendation; which when I offered to answer, she would not so much as hear me. Then she went on saying she was not of that base quality to be used so ill. Then I made her both hear me, and end that discourse."

An interesting bed-curtain lecture! We may be sure of its accuracy, not only as it bears the sign-manual, but because it is full of nature and truth, as some critics will be more able to decide than others. It is evident that Charles must have acquired a perfect mastery of the language of his pouting Queen, to have been enabled so completely to have maintained his

rights, and so successfully to have circumscribed hers.

The French establishment was daily increasing in number and expense, but the grievances were of a more delicate nature. The personal happiness of the King and the tranquillity of the people were involved in a French and Roman Catholic faction in the English Court. The most obnoxious person was Father Sancy, who was instigating the Queen to the most unqualified demands, urging the treaty to a tittle. He was extremely offensive to Charles, and is unquestionably the person alluded to in Charles the First's letter to Louis the Thirteenth. "I will also omit the affront she did me, before my going to this last unhappy assembly of Parliament, because there has been talk enough of that already, &c. The author of it is before you in France." Charles indeed had expelled Father Sancy, and sent him back. We shall shortly see what sort of an actor he was in this political pantomime.

The single act of sovereignty alone could triumph over these domestic and public troubles. And this Charles at length resolved on, at the risk and menace of a war with France. In November 1625, Charles wrote to Buckingham, who was at Paris, that he was then de-

liberating on the most convenient means "to cashier" the whole party, for "I am resolved it must be done, and that shortly." He transmits by the same courier a double letter to Buckingham, which he might read to the Queen-Mother, that the measure might not come unexpected. The firmness of Charles on this occasion originated with the King himself, and not with the Duke, as the French themselves and some historians have supposed. The dismissal of these persons was not the act of a hasty and vindictive monarch; for though his resolution appears in November 1625, it was delayed till July of the following year. One evening, accompanied by his officers of state, he summoned the French household to Somerset House. He addressed them without anger.

"GENTLEMEN AND LADIES,

"I am driven to that extremity, as I am personally come to acquaint you, that I very earnestly desire your return into France. True it is, the deportment of some amongst you hath been very inoffensive to me; but others again have so dallied with my patience, and so highly affronted me, as I cannot, and will not longer endure it."*

* L'Estrange.

The King's address implicating no one, was immediately followed by a volley of protestations of innocence. The Bishop desired to learn his fault, that he might defend himself while here; while the haughty Madame St. George, now seconding the young Bishop in their common cause, referred the King to her mistress. "Sir, I make no question, but the Queen will give a fair testimonial of my conduct to your Majesty." The King, in departing, only replied, "I name none." All bowed to the King, and he returned the compliment.*

The Queen, overcome with grief and anger, impetuously remonstrated with the King. Her tender years had not yet suffered so open an indignity. Was a daughter of France and a Queen of England to be treated like a prisoner, rather than a Princess?—Was she not to retain even a domestic, but at the precarious pleasure of her husband's will? It required the strength of character of Charles, not to have yielded to the tears or the rage of his youthful

* The account of the *Mercure Français*, drawn up by one of the parties, closely agrees with that which I find in Hamon L'Estrange, the first English historian of Charles. The French writer however, adds, that "Some of us observed that the King's countenance was sad, and he seemed to hesitate in speaking to us, which the Earl of Holland perceiving, he whispered three or four words behind the King."

Queen, who in her vehement anger is said to have broken several panes of the window where she stood taking a sad farewell of her confidential companions and servants, till the King forcibly dragged her away, and bade her "be satisfied, for it must be so."

An hour after the King had delivered his commands, Lord Conway announced to the foreigners, that early in the morning carriages and carts and horses would be ready for them and their baggage. Amidst a scene of confusion, the young Bishop protested that this was impossible, that they owed debts in London, and that much was due to them. On the following day, the *Procureur-General* of the Queen flew to the Keeper of the Great Seal at the Privy Council, requiring an admission to address His Majesty, then present at his Council, on matters important to himself and the Queen. This being denied, he exhorted them to maintain the Queen in all her royal prerogatives, and he was answered, "So we do."

Their prayers and disputes served to postpone their departure. Their conduct during this time was not very decorous. It appears, by a contemporary letter-writer, that they flew to take possession of the Queen's wardrobe and jewels. They did not leave her a change of

linen, since it was with difficulty Her Majesty procured one. Every one now looked to lay his hand on what he might call his own. Every thing he could touch was a perquisite. One extraordinary expedient was that of inventing bills to the amount of ten thousand pounds, for articles, and other engagements in which they had entered for the service of the Queen, which Her Majesty acknowledged, but afterwards confessed that the debts were fictitious. Even "the Bishop's unholy water" served to swell the accounts. In truth, the breaking up of this French establishment was ruinous to the individuals who had purchased their places at the rate of life-annuities. The French party were still protracting and resisting. The King's verbal dismissal had been delivered on the 1st of July, and the French were still here on the 7th of August, as we find by a note from the King to Buckingham. Its indignant style, some historical critics, with too little knowledge of personal history, have quoted as an evidence of Charles's unfeeling tyrannical temper.

"STEENIE,

"I have receaved your letter by Dic Greame (Sir Richard Graham). This is my answer. I command you to send all the French away to-

morrow out of the towne, if you can by fair meanes, (but stike not long in disputing,) otherways force them away, dryving them away lyke so manie wildl beastes, until ye have shipped them, and so the devil goe with them. Let me heare no answer, but of the performance of my command. So I rest

Your faithful, constant, loving friend,

C. R."

"Oaking,
the 7th of August, 1626."

Charles wrote in honest anger; yet notwithstanding his personal provocations, he was still tender of their feelings and their interests. He discharged even the fictitious debts, and provided for their pensions, at the cost, as it appears, of fifty thousand pounds. Even the haughty beauty, Madame St. George, was presented by the King, on her dismission, with several thousand pounds and jewels.

The French Bishop and the whole party having contrived all sorts of delays to avoid the expulsion, the yeomen of the guards were sent to turn them out of Somerset-house, whence the juvenile prelate, at the same time making his protest and mounting the steps of the coach, took his departure "head and

shoulders." In a long procession of near forty coaches, after four days tedious travelling, they reached Dover, but the spectacle of these impatient foreigners, so reluctantly quitting England, gesticulating their sorrows, or their quarrels, exposed them to the derision and stirred up the prejudices of the common people. As Madame St. George, whose vivacity is always described as extravagantly French, was stepping into the boat, one of the mob could not resist the satisfaction of flinging a stone at her French cap. An English courtier, who was conducting her, instantly quitted his charge, ran the fellow through the body, and quietly returned to the boat. The man died on the spot, but no farther notice appears to have been taken of the inconsiderate gallantry of this English courtier.

To satisfy the King and Queen of France, Lord Carleton was sent over to Paris, and very ill received; Marshal Bassompierre was dispatched to London, as ambassador extraordinary, to remonstrate with Charles.

The first open insult from the French Court was the reappearance of the obnoxious Father Sancy, in the suite of Bassompierre. Charles signified his instant command that he should be sent back to France, but this the Marshal,

according to his instructions, refused; observing, that the King could have nothing to do with his domestic arrangements, by which Father Sancy occupied the place of his confessor. This, however, was but the public language of that adroit ambassador, and not his private opinion; for he had remonstrated with his King and the Queen-Mother of France, on the impropriety of forcing this intermeddler on him, and he had foreseen the offence the presence of Sancy would occasion to the English Monarch. The recent able commentator on "the Embassy of the Marshal Bassompierre to the Court of England," in perceiving the jealousy which Charles entertained of this embassy, could not discover "why this man was so peculiarly agreeable to one Court, and so peculiarly offensive to the other." This knot is not difficult to untie. This political religionist, by consulting in his conduct the pleasure and interest of one Court, was, in fact, necessarily incurring the jealousy and anger of the other. We have already shown that Father Sancy was expelled by Charles, and there is no doubt that he was secretly invested with some dominant authority from the Queen-Mother; for Bassompierre discovered, that when the Queen quarrelled, both with her husband and

with himself, as ambassador, Father Sancy was at the bottom of the intrigue, and maintained his authority with such audacity, that Bassompierre found out that the ambassador was not the chief person in the embassy.

Charles thrice insisted on sending back Father Sancy, before he would grant a private audience. The Marshal could only promise that the Father should remain confined to his house, nor ever show himself either at Court or in the city. No specific ground of complaint had been produced against this "domestic;" as Bassompierre observed, "This Father was neither guilty, nor condemned, nor accused;" and yet we see that Charles would tolerate his presence on no account. It is evident that his offences were of a nature not less grievous than delicate; offences which Charles would not condescend to detail, but which, if we connect with the circumstance alluded to in his letter to his brother of France; the former expulsion of Father Sancy when Henrietta's confessor from the English Court; the intriguing character of this political instrument of the Royal Family of France; the promise of Bassompierre that Sancy should not be seen either at Court, or in the city; and certain rumours prevalent at the time that the Queen

had violated her secret intercourse with the King, by disclosures to her confessor, we cannot but infer that this *espion* of a priest would be meddling with other matters than religion.

The reception of Bassompierre, before he reached London, was studiedly uncivil, in order to balance the cold entertainment which Lord Carleton had suffered at Paris. The Master of the Ceremonies was ordered not to meet him nearer than at Gravesend, and to prepare no house, all which the Marshal perfectly understood, and refused the King's diet, for that "he would not eat at another's expense in his own house." And at his first interview with the King at Hampton Court, he came too late, "purposely it was thought," for the dinner which had been prepared; and when "a collation was then set on the table, it remained untasted by him or his fellows"—from whence Sir John Finet, in the Ambassador's loss of appetite, sagaciously predicted *war! war! war!*

We have a curious account by the French Marshal, how Charles was so personally indignant at the matters proposed to be discussed, and so disconcerted lest the womanish passions of the Queen would break out at a public interview, that he refused to grant one. This intelligence was conveyed by Buckingham, who

was at a loss how to proceed in this delicate conjuncture, and confidentially begged for the advice of the French Marshal. The vivacious Gaul, who found himself on the point of receiving this affront, to save himself, and at the same time to insinuate himself into the good graces of Buckingham, hit on an expedient worthy of French diplomacy. After a pompous declaration, that "he could not act otherwise than as had been prescribed by his Royal Master, he granted that the King of England might shorten or lengthen the audience he demanded, in what manner he would." It was then the French Marshal threw out a project how both parties might save their honour. This cunning child of diplomatic etiquette, suggested that the King, being then at Hampton Court, might, "after having allowed me to make him my bow, and having received with the King's letters my first compliments, when I should come to open to him the occasion of my coming, the King may interrupt me, and say, Sir, you are come from London, and you have to return thither; it is late, this matter requires a longer time than I could now give you. I shall send for you at an earlier hour, &c., and after some civil expressions about the King my brother-in-law, and the Queen

my mother-in-law, his Majesty will add, that he would not further delay the impatience of the Queen, my wife, has to hear of them from yourself. Upon which I shall take my leave of him, to make my bow to the Queen." Buckingham appears to have been enraptured by this notable preconcerted public interview. The English Duke embraced the French Marshal, exclaiming, "You know more of these things than we!" and went away laughing, to tell the King of this expedient, who accepted it, and it appears most punctually conned over his part.

At length, a stormy interview took place. De Blainville appears to have been sent to quarrel with the King, but Bassompierre to hold him in awe. Charles could not restrain the heat of his temper, and once exclaimed to the ambassador, "Why do you not execute your commission at once, and declare war?" Bassompierre's answer was firm and dignified—"I am not a herald to declare war, but a Marshal of France to make it when declared." The King was firm, and even stern during the discussion, but he seems to have been struck by the temper, the presence of mind, and ingenuity of Bassompierre. At the close of the audience, his own temper became more molli-

fied, and the King himself conducted the Marshal through several galleries to the Queen's apartments, where he left him, and subsequently honoured the French Marshal with all the civilities, in his private character, which Charles had denied to his public.

This mission was a total failure, and the French Marshal, with all his vaunts and his menaces, discovered that Charles was inflexible, and sternly offered the alternative of war, rather than permit a French faction to be planted in an English court. At this moment, Charles the First was the true representative of his subjects, and the sovereign participated in the same feelings with the people. Four years afterwards, when the attempt was again revived, of settling a French bishop and a French physician about the Queen, Charles absolutely refused them admittance; and it appears by Panzani's Memoirs, that when Charles learnt that the Abbé du Perron, the Queen's confessor, was raised to a bishoprick in France, he was earnest in desiring his recall. So jealous was the English monarch of any Catholic bishop at London, and in close communication with the Queen, without his sanction. The Court of England too was always wary of the liberties which foreign ambassadors took in

admitting English Catholics into their chapels, for the English Catholics would be divided into French and Spanish factions by the bishops of either nation.*

Bassompierre returned home mortified at the intractable character both of the English monarch and the English nation. In addressing the former French bishop who had been sent off, the Marshal writes, "See, Sir, to what we are reduced! and imagine my grief, that the Queen of Great Britain has the pain of viewing my departure, without being of any service to her; but if you consider that I was sent here to make a contract of marriage observed, and to maintain the Catholic religion, in a country from which they formerly banished it to break a contract of marriage, you will assist in excusing me of this failure."

This affair of the French Household, which constituted a party of French politics and Roman Catholicism under the roof of the Sovereign, was one of those intricate cases, where political expediency seems to violate all moral right. The Queen and her party were obstinately pressing for the treaty, but all promises and conventions in State-treaties imply,

* Panzani, 185.

that affairs should not change, so as to affect the interests of the State. The intention is more concerned in these treaties, than that strictness of terms which might possibly exact the performance of that which should never have been required, any more than it should have been granted. If French politics were fomenting civil discord, and Roman Catholicism exciting odium among his own people,—Charles would have indeed betrayed his weakness as a Sovereign, had he not dismissed the French party.

Louis the Thirteenth had found himself in a parallel, though not so perplexing a state, with his own foreign Princess, and was compelled to discard her Spanish household; and while the French monarch was now complaining of the violation of the treaty, he well knew that it could never be carried into execution. The subscribing parties to this deed of imposture and insincerity, had never imagined that the treaty in all its details should be carried into effect; and this was honestly acknowledged by the very Ambassador Extraordinary who came to complain of its infraction.

This history of the household of the Queen of Charles the First, would be imperfect were we to pass unnoticed the return of a certain

number of priests for the religious service of the Queen,—four years had elapsed since the former dismissal. The *rentrée* was granted at the peace, at once public and domestic, between the two Courts.

The manuscript memoir of one of the Capuchins who was employed in "the Mission of England," as he denominates his residence here, supplies some curious particulars. Of these missionaries, for such they deemed themselves, and as such they were regarded by Urban the Eighth, we may observe their system, their designs, the little artifices they practised, and other details of the conversions of many English persons of both sexes.

The Capuchins was an order which professed the severest asceticism; and the English Catholics rejoiced as if these men had come from Heaven, that those who had abandoned the faith of their ancestors might once more contemplate, in the very habits worn by these missionaries, the poverty of Jesus; in their manners, the humility of the Gospel, and in their language the contempt of riches and pleasure. The people were struck with their long beards and their monachal dresses, and crowds came to see a class of men, whose voluntary mortifications seemed to have been long forgotten among a people, who, even at this period, ac-

cording to the representations of many foreigners, enjoyed more personal comforts, a word said to be peculiar to ourselves, than were to be found among other nations. The good fathers, discovering that their apparent state of self-mortification seemed to raise the wonder of their visitors, practised a little pious fraud. The Capuchin historian ingeniously observes, "*The land of the English is abundant, and without taxes; the inhabitants lead easy lives, far removed from the miseries of other places,* which accounts for the surprise with which the sight of our austerities strangely affected them." To edify them and incline them to a holy conversion, they resolved, with one common consent, to add something striking and sensible to their usual austerities. Their beds consisted of a paillasse, a straw pillow, and a coverlet. They took out every morning the paillasses and the pillows, exposing to the eye the rough naked boards on which they lay, and placed an unhewn block of wood for a pillow-case. This little apparent rigour was admired by the English, whose curiosity led them into the chamber of the Capuchins, and when they seemed touched by the inspection of this hard life, then they were reminded of the suffering life of Jesus; that they must imitate St. Paul, who,

confirmed in grace, mortified his flesh; and at last, with a gentle close, they were exhorted to think of the importance of living and dying in the true religion where these things are practised. These showy austerities seem to have produced a certain effect. The fathers, too, without loss of time, among their penances, had set about learning the English language, and within a year were capable of receiving confessions in the native language of their penitents; but the greater number of conversions were made after the building of the chapel, of which Her Majesty laid the foundations with her own royal hands.

The detail of the remarkable opening of the Queen's Chapel is a curiosity of picturesque devotion. It may serve, at least, as a splendid evidence of a scenical religion, and the art of getting up something like a modern opera, or rather an ancient mystery, aided by all the magic of the voice and the instrument, and the optical illusions of perspective.

In 1636, the Queen's Chapel was erected, and "to give greater glory to God, and esteem for the Roman Catholic religion to the Huguenots, her Majesty would hear the first mass celebrated with all the pomp and magnificence possible." The Capuchins were commanded to

omit nothing which they could invent to render the solemnity more august. An illustrious sculptor had recently arrived from Rome, to whom they applied to assist the pious design. He graciously assented. He raised a machine, the admiration of the most ingenious artists, to exhibit the most holy sacraments with the greatest majesty.

A paradise of glory, adapted to the dome of the chapel, was raised forty feet in height; a broad arch was sustained by two columns before the great altar; the spaces between the columns and the walls served as passages to pass from the sacristy to the altar; the choirs of music were placed with the organs and the other instruments at both sides of the empty spaces. In the opening on each side appeared a prophet with a scroll of prophecy, and above the arch was viewed the portative altar, to which they ascended by three divisions of steps. The greatest, in front, had a balustrade, which admitted a full view of the altar to the assistants, and those on either side were surrounded also by balusters, where the priests, dressed in their pontifical habits, without interruption of the people, were viewed ascending or descending to and from the altar.

At the back of the altar was the Paradise,

elevated above circles of clouds, in which were intermingled the figures of angels, archangels, of cherubims and seraphims, to the number of two hundred: there some seemed adoring the holy sacrament, others were singing, or touching all sorts of musical instruments,—painted according to the rules of perspective; the most holy sacrament was the point of light where the concealed lights, which were of graduated dimensions, made the depth and the distance appear very great; and the number of figures seemed doubled, deceiving by an ingenious artifice, not only the eyes but also the ears, for every one imagined, on looking on that Paradise, that they were listening to the melodies played by angels.

Of the circles of clouds, the first were the widest, diminishing in proportion to the last. The three first circles contained the angels larger than the natural side, seated on clouds, singing and playing; in the fourth and fifth were also angels, habited as *Diacres*, holding censors; others *Navettes*, those silver vessels in the shape of a ship, in which incense is burned; while others, on their knees, were suppliants; and others, prostrated, were pointing to the holy sacrament; all of size proportioned to their distances. In the sixth and seventh circles, winged children, in various attitudes, like

young angels, were seen coming out of a cloud, playing together, but with gestures full of respect, inviting the people to rejoice with them at the sight of the adorable sacrament. In the eighth and ninth circles, appeared the cherubim and the seraphim, among the clouds, surrounded by luminous rays, contrived by a most singular artifice. The place where was laid the holy sacrament, had a ground of gold, surrounded by a deep red oval, with golden beams, so that it seemed a celestial fire. Four hundred lights, besides a great multitude of tapers, artistly arranged upon the altar, lighted the first circle.

These things being thus disposed, the whole was covered over by two curtains. When the Queen entered with her Court to celebrate mass, and had taken her seat, the curtains were drawn, and these wonders suddenly burst on the spectators, to the admiration, the joy, and the devotion of her Majesty, and all the Catholics; at the same moment, the musicians and choristers resounded a motet of soft harmony, seeming to come out of the clouds and the angelic figures. Paradise was opening, and the angels were musicians! so it seemed, for the singers themselves were hidden, and thus the eye and the ear rejoiced in this subject of piety and artifice. The motet or hymn

nished, the Accolytes, the Soudiacres, and the Diacres, and my Lord du Perron, Bishop of Angouleme, and grand almoner to the Queen, dressed in their pontifical habits, issued from the sacristy, mounted the eight steps of the altar, celebrated with the greatest solemnities the holy mass, which was chaunted in eight divisions so melodiously, that nothing less than a heart of stone but would have been deeply touched; tears of joy were seen to fall from the eyes of the Queen, considering in this pious and splendid ceremony the grace which God had bestowed on her, to raise a church where the divine offices were celebrated, which heresy had banished from England for more than one hundred years. The mass celebrated, a multitude of Catholics crowded to receive the holy communion from the hand of the bishop, who gave his benediction and dispensed his indulgences.

After dinner, her Majesty again returned to vespers, and complins, and the sermon. Messieurs the musicians, perceiving the effect they had produced on the Queen at the morning-service, now surpassed themselves. At the close of vespers, the Archbishop delivered a pathetic sermon, congratulating the Queen on having a Catholic church, and publicly cele-

brating divine service, which had been abolished so many years in England, Scotland, and Ireland. Great was the applause of the audience. Those who were in the chapel, found it difficult to issue from the vast confluence of people, who forced their way to witness the magnificence. This continued influx lasted so long, that it was impossible to close the gates of the church till the third night, when the King commanded that they should all retire. He came himself to be a spectator of this magnificent representation, accompanied by his Grand Marechal, the Comptroller of the Household, and other Lords—he admired the *artifice*—he kept his eyes long on the beautiful scene—declared that he had never viewed any thing more beautiful, nor of a happier invention. The chapel thus ornamented, was kept open from the eighth of December to Christmas, consecrated to the immaculate conception of the most holy Virgin. Crowds flocked, and waited two or three hours before they could enter a confessional. They held controversies and conferences, to confirm the Faithful and to reclaim the Heretic. The historian exults in a favourite argument, by which it was inevitably shown that there could be no salvation for separatists from the true Apostolical and

Roman Church; but some Protestants, who had conceived that this glorious proposition was false, were desirous of receiving more solid reasons for their maturer consideration—of these, we are told that many, convinced of its truth, renounced their errors.

One of the Capuchins held secret interviews with some of our divines, intimate friends of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who, with the Archbishop, were desirous of approximating the two churches so nearly together, that an union might be insensibly formed.

Before the arrival of these Capuchins, we are told that the schismatics had a strange aversion to the Pope and the Catholics—they really believed that his Holiness was the Antichrist,—and the Catholics, idolators, persecutors, seditious, and enemies of peace and Kings. Our memorialist describes the Representatives of the English people: "So many persons collected together from all parts of the country, who compose the Parliament, had issued against them (the Papists), the most terrible ordinances —for the simplicity of the more moderate had been sadly imposed on." The Capuchin has collected together all the penal laws against the Roman Catholics—a code of blood and persecution equal to any they could themselves have dictated!

But "the ancient piety of the English," which our simple fathers were flattering themselves they were to revive, and which had even lasted through the reign of "the barbarous Queen" (Elizabeth), could only be beaten down by "the cruelty of the Protestants" in "the mad fury of a regicide Parliament."

As a prelude to what is to follow, I find a parallel closely run through a long page or two, between the Jews mocking at Jesus Christ, and the Protestants, who had lately pulled down a crucifix, and were very nearly pulling at the beards of *les Pères Capuchins* themselves. When the Queen unexpectedly left her palace, to which she never returned, the mission, which had hitherto proceeded quietly, became strangely inconvenienced. Nothing now but spitting and coughing at their sermons. "The Puritans" had now resolved to abolish the very name of Catholic in England—*Exinanite, exinanite, usque ad fundamentum!** The solemn

* Observe the nature of intolerance. This very passage was applied by the Jesuits when they rased the foundations of the *Port Royal*. Whenever the persecutors in their turn became the persecuted, they speak alike, and remind us of that verse of Gray, how all must suffer as men.

"The tender for another's pain,
The *unfeeling* for *their own*."

omen of their impending destruction has been chronicled by our memorialist. One morning, when they had assembled to perform the august ceremony of the most holy mass—preparing to take out the *Ciboire*, the vase which held the body of their God, in opening the cupboard—the host was not there! Tremour and agony and despair shook the brotherhood, who looking on each other in dismay, felt like the ancient Jews when the Shekinah had departed from them,—when the veil was rent from the Holy of Holies, and nothing was to be seen but a naked wall. What followed shortly after, seemed to be connected with the malicious sacrilege of all their consecrated wafers. The Puritans sent three thousand apprentices to the Parliament, to demand the expulsion of the Capuchins from England. The fathers awaited their death by the side of their altars, where they were prepared to suffer the blessings of martyrdom; but they were only sent to prison for a month, and then shipped off for Calais.

Thus terminated the history of the Household of our Catholic Queen, Henrietta-Maria.

CHAPTER X.

CHARLES THE FIRST AFTER THE DEATH OF BUCKINGHAM.—DISSOLUTION OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT.

THE extraordinary manner in which Charles the First received the intelligence of the assassination of the favourite, has occasioned very opposite strictures from party-writers.

Charles was at his morning service, when Sir Thomas Hippisley abruptly entering with an agitated countenance, whispered in the King's ear the portentous and overwhelming event. The King remained unmoved, and when the chaplain paused as the rumour spread through the presence-chamber, the King bidding him proceed, continued without interruption his devotions.

The perfect composure of the King on this trying and sudden occasion, induced those courtiers, who study looks, and presume they read

countenances, to imagine that the death of the favourite was felt as a relief by the monarch—and some have even considered it as a striking evidence of his natural insensibility.

It is certainly a very observable incident in the history of Charles the First, but connecting it with what followed, it is the most certain indication of this monarch's strength of character. The imperturbable majesty of the mind of Charles the First never deserted him. But, as the character of no man has been viewed in such strong but opposite lights as that of this monarch, we find it sometimes difficult to discriminate his motives in his conduct. Perseverance and obstinacy, fortitude and insensibility, are terms which the predilections of parties apply to the same actions.

The exterior fortitude of Charles on one of the most surprising and awful events which had hitherto happened to him, was doubtless influenced by the sacredness of the moment in which it met him. Whether Charles were a martyr or not, certain it is, that in his religious soul he had the perfect devotion of one. But who can doubt that he felt the loss which an ordinary mind would have conceived irreparable? Divine service closed, the King hurried to his chamber, and throwing himself on the

bed, he passionately moaned, shedding abundant tears. The memory of the delightful intimate to whom he had trusted all his thoughts, and the spirited servant on whom the hope of his glory rested, now a miserable corpse, disturbed his mind, and cast it into a deep melancholy, which lasted for many days. Had Clarendon not furnished this fact, the insensibility of the King might only have been known to us. I cannot here avoid noticing the spirit of a party-writer, evinced in his peculiar mode of reasoning. The affecting narrative of Clarendon, Mr. Brodie declares to be inconsistent with that idea of "self-command" which Charles had shown on the first intelligence. As "the countenance is an infallible index to the mind," according to Mr. Brodie, he has been enabled to penetrate into the instantaneous idea which rose in the mind of Charles on hearing of the assassination; it was a great political result, which steadied the royal countenance; and Mr. Brodie imagines that "hopes of greater submission to his measures from Parliament soothed his anguish for the loss."* Unless Charles the First had been Mr.

* Brodie, ii. 209. The whole is a very curious specimen of the special pleading of our Scottish advocate, who is always discussing, and never describing, with arguments for one side, and none for the other.

Brodie himself at that instant, he could not have thought so much of the Parliament, and so little of Buckingham.

The surprise of this most unexpected termination of the life of his Minister, furnishes another evidence of the strength of character which I have frequently traced in Charles the First. Even his inconsolable grief was not suffered to delay the expedition,—there was no indecision, no feebleness in Charles's conduct. The King's personal industry astonished all in office; now, more was effectuated in six weeks, than in the Duke's time in six months. The death of Buckingham caused no changes, the King left every man to his own charge, but took the general direction into his own hands.* In private, Charles deeply mourned the loss of Buckingham; he gave no encouragement to his enemies, the King called him "his martyr," and declared, that "the world was greatly mistaken in him, for it was thought that the favourite had ruled his Majesty; but it was far otherwise, for that the Duke had been to him a faithful and an obedient servant." Such were the feelings and ideas of this unfortunate Mo-

* From MS. letters—Lord Dorset to the Earl of Carlisle. Sloane MSS. 4178. Letter 519.

narch, with which it is necessary to become acquainted, before we judge of him as a man.

All the foreign expeditions of Charles the First were alike disastrous. The vast genius of Richelieu ascending to its meridian, had paled our ineffectual star. The dreadful surrender of La Rochelle had sent back our army and navy baffled and disgraced. Buckingham had timely perished to be saved from the reproach of one more political crime.

Such failures could not improve the temper of the times, but the most brilliant success would not probably have changed the fate of Charles the First, nor allayed the fiery spirits in the Commons.

Parliament met. The King's speech was conciliatory. He acknowledged that the exaction of the duties of the Customs was not a right of his prerogative, but the gift of the people. He declared that he had as great an aversion to arbitrary power as themselves, and closed with a fervent ejaculation that the session began with confidence, might end with a mutual good understanding. The King's speech, or, as Oldmixon calls it, "the King's fine speaking," was even received with a murmur of applause; a circumstance so unusual, that it is alluded to in subsequent royal mes-

sages. The King, to urge the conclusion of his right to levy the Customs, observes, that if not granted, he should think that "his speech, which was with good applause accepted, had not that good effect which he expected."

The shade of Buckingham was no longer cast between Charles the First and the Commons; and yet we find that "their dread and dear sovereign" was not allowed any repose on the throne.

A new demon of national discord, religion in a metaphysical garb, reared its distracted head. This evil spirit had been raised by the conduct of the Court divines, whose political sermons, with their attempts to return to the more solemn ceremonies of the Roman Church, alarmed some tender consciences; and in a panic of "Jesuits and Arminians" it served as a masked battery for the patriotic party to change their grounds at will, without slackening their fire. When the King urged for the duties of his Customs, he found that he was addressing a committee sitting for religion! Sir John Eliot threw out a singular expression. Alluding to the bishops, whom he called "Masters of Ceremonies," he confessed that some ceremonies were commendable, such as standing up together at the repetition of the creed, to tes-

tify our resolution to defend the religion we profess; and, he added, "in some churches they did not only stand upright, but with *their swords drawn*." His speech was a spark that fell into a well-laid train; it is difficult to conceive the wild enthusiasm of the House of Commons at that moment. They now entered into a *vow* to preserve the articles of religion established by Parliament in the thirteenth year of our late Queen Elizabeth! And they rejected the sense of any doctrines not only of "the Jesuits and the Arminians," but of "*all others wherein they differ from us.*" And this *vow* was immediately followed up by a petition to the King for a *fast* for the increasing miseries of the reformed Churches abroad. Parliaments are liable to have their passions!

On the state of the Reformed abroad, the King answered, "that fighting would do them more good than fasting;" he did not disapprove of the latter, but as he appears to have been always anxious to explain his intention, he added a note that these fasts were not to be so frequent. During their fast they probably conned over their declaration that Tonnage and Poundage must yield precedency to religion! Still the King was patient; he confessed that "he did not think religion was in so much

danger as they affirmed;" but as the levying the Customs was occasioning great violence between his officers and those who referring to the Parliamentary debates, disputed the King's right to levy them, Charles wished for its conclusion, "not so much out of the greediness of the thing, as out of a desire to put an end to those questions which had arisen between me and some of my subjects."

Never had the King urged less arbitrary claims, never had he used a more subdued style, but never had the Commons raged with a fiercer spirit, since they had sat in their theological synod. In the orgasm of that conventicle spirit which, many years after, was to disgrace our annals, the House of Commons resolved, that "the business of the King of this Earth should give place to the business of the King of Heaven!" What new style was this? Whose tones pierced the roof of the Commons? Whose voice is speaking? A young man, as yet unknown to Fame—Oliver Cromwell! He sat in a saintly committee denouncing those divines, who, as he expressed it, "preached flat Popery." "It is amusing," writes the philosophical historian, "to observe the first words of this fanatical hypocrite correspond so exactly to his character." Francis Rous, afterwards a creature of

Cromwell's, and Speaker of Barebone's Parliament, whose writings were collected and "dedicated to the Saints, and to the Excellent throughout the three nations," was frequently a leading spirit in this new feud; he excelled in adapting his fanatical eloquence to earthly objects. On the Custom-house duties he observed, "it is an old trick of the Devil's when he meant to take away Job's religion, to begin at his goods, 'lay thy hand on what he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.'" On religion, he said, "when lower natures are backed by higher, they increase in courage and strength; if man be backed with Omnipotency, he is a kind of omnipotent creature; all things are possible to him that believeth, and where all things are possible there is a kind of omnipotency." Thus long before the nation was maddened, the madmen existed who were to make them so. One Lewis, out of the House, having exclaimed, "the Devil take the Parliament," was summoned before the Saints, and the Devil's good-wisher had to answer for his seditious language.

So far from any anxiety to terminate the troubles of the Sovereign and the People, the Commons now insisted that Charles should give up the receivers of the Customs as capital

enemies to the King and the kingdom, and that those persons who submitted to pay their duties, should be denounced guilty as accessaries.

Often have Kings been tyrannical, and sometimes have Parliaments; a body corporate, with the infection of passion may perform acts of injustice equally with the individual who abuses the power with which he is invested.

In separating the King from his officers, the Commons pretended to hold the King blameless; but Charles evinced, at least, his sincerity, or, as was expressed in his message, "his justice and honour," when he would not consent to sacrifice his own servants. The same principle was at work with the Opposition members, which had instigated them against the late minister; the officers of the Customs were now the representatives of Buckingham, these were the ostensible objects of attack, the concealed one was the Sovereign. The Custom-house and the Church alternately served their purpose.

The sole object of the Government was to settle the legal levy of the duties, which required but a formal confirmation; but the Commons, sensible that this once granted, might terminate their sittings, were willing to agitate any subject, terrestial or celestial, but tonnage and poundage.

Sir John Eliot, one part of whose eloquence certainly consisted in the most stinging personalities, was pouring forth invectives against some courtiers—Neile, the Bishop of Winchester, and the Lord Treasurer, Weston. "Buckingham is dead, but he revives in the two chiefs, Neile and Weston, who are animated with the same spirit, and tread in the same steps, and who, he declared, for fear would break Parliaments, lest Parliaments should break them." He was sometimes interrupted, and sometimes cheered. The timid Speaker refusing to put the question, declaring that "he was otherwise commanded from the King," suffered a severe reprimand from Selden. "If you will not put it we must sit still, thus we shall never be able to do any thing." The House adjourned in great heat. This was the dark prognostic of their next meeting, on Monday the 2d of March, 1629, which Sir Symonds D'Ewes has marked in his diary, as "the most gloomy, sad, and dismal day for England that happened for five hundred years.

On this fatal day, the Speaker still refusing to put the question, and announcing the King's command for an adjournment, (an intermediate one had already occurred,) Sir John Eliot stood up. The Speaker attempted to leave the chair,

but two members placed themselves on each side, and forcibly kept him down. Eliot, who had prepared certain resolutions, flung down a paper on the floor, crying out that it might be read! His party vociferated for the reading; others that it should not. A sudden tumult broke out. Coriton, an ardent patriot, struck another member, and many laid their hands on their swords. It was imagined, out of doors, that swords had actually been drawn, for a Welsh page, running in great haste when he heard the noise, cried to the door-keeper, "I pray you let hur in! let hur in! to give hur master his sword."—"Shall we," said one, "be sent home as we were last sessions, turned off like scattered sheep?" The weeping, trembling Speaker still persisting, was dragged to and fro by opposite parties; the Clerk of the Commons was not less inflexible in not reading the paper of Sir John Eliot. Sir John Finch, the unfortunate Speaker, with a poverty of spirit, filled a situation as critical as it was elevated. He heard himself bitterly reproached by his kinsman, Sir Peter Hayman, whose name the reader may recollect, "as the disgrace of his country, the blot of a noble family, and whom posterity will remember with scorn and disdain." Hard fate of weak men, who on some

emergency are called out to act a part above their natures, and want even the dignity which might save them from contempt!

Eliot, finding the House so strongly divided, undauntedly snatching up the paper, said, "I shall then express that by my tongue which this paper should have done." Denzil Holles assumed the character of Speaker, putting the question, which was returned by the acclamations of the party. The doors were locked, and the keys laid on the table. The King sent the Serjeant to bring away the mace, but the royal messenger could obtain no admission: the Usher of the Black Rod met no more regard. The King then ordered the Captain of his Guard to force an entrance; that incident however was not to happen till several years after. The resolutions concerning Papistry and Poundage had passed before the guard appeared;—the door was flung open, the rush of the members was a torrent, and many were struck with horror at the conflicting scene they had witnessed. It was a sad image of the future.

The King, on dissolving this Parliament, gives us at least his idea of it. "It is far from me to judge all the House alike guilty, for there are there as dutiful subjects as any in the world; it being but *some few vipers* among

them that did cast this mist of undutifulness over most of their eyes." At the time, many undoubtedly considered that a mere faction was formed among the Commons. Sir Symonds D'Ewes was no politician, but unquestionably his ideas were not peculiar to himself. He discriminates this last third Parliament, "the greater part of the House were morally honest men, who were the least guilty of the fatal breach, being only misled by some other *Machiavelian politics, who seemed zealous for the liberty of the Commonwealth*, and by that means, at the moving of their outward freedom, drew the votes of those good men on their side."

In the sudden dissolution of this Parliament, the Lord-Keeper in the accustomed form, addressed the House of Commons, though they had not been summoned, nor was the Speaker present. It is said, that the King, in disrobing himself, declared, that "he would never put on those robes again."

The conduct of Charles the First through this last Parliament is now before us. Conceding the great constitutional points, and even professing an abhorrence of arbitrary measures, his opening speech extorted a murmur of applause. His conduct varied in its progress; a strange monster of discord grappled with the

Sovereign in the even path, and in the mind of Charles he recognised the spawn of faction. Now Laud was to be substituted for Buckingham—religion for government. Patient, till patience ceased to be a virtue, after many struggles with himself, we see the King more and more irritated. Anger and despair closed the Parliament—perhaps for ever!

To Charles the First, the menacing language and the tumultuous acts of the great leaders, appeared seditious. He declared, that "they designed his ruin."

Ten of the most eminent members were summoned to the council-table, among whom were Denzil Holles, Sir John Eliot, and Selden—illustrious names! They were now placed in the cruel predicament of contending for their Parliamentary rights against the wounded feelings of the Sovereign, and the judicial decisions of the legislature. It raised up one of the greatest and the longest legal controversies which had been started for many years.

Charles the First was strongly affected when he heard that Holles had been so deeply implicated in seconding the resolutions which Eliot had prepared. The Monarch exclaimed, "Et tu Brute! I wonder at it! for we two were

fellow-revellers in a masque together."* We see by this pathetic exclamation, how Charles the First could not avoid blending his personal feelings with the Parliamentary opposition; the King, indeed, appears to have had a personal knowledge of most of the great leaders of the present party; a circumstance of some importance which has not been noticed by historians.

At the council-table, Holles declared that he came to the House with zeal for his Majesty's service, but finding his Majesty was offended with him, he humbly desired that he might rather be the subject of his mercy than of his *power*. On this the Lord-Treasurer observed, "You mean, rather of his Majesty's mercy, than of his *justice*:" Holles repeated, "I say of his Majesty's power, my Lord." Sir John Eliot questioned for words spoken in the House, and for producing the last offensive resolutions, with his accustomed keenness of language declared, "that whatsoever was performed by him in that place and at that time, as a member of that House, he would ever be ready to give an account of his sayings and doings in that place whenever he should be called to it by the House. But now, as a private man, he could

* Hamon l'Estrange, 82 fo.

not trouble himself to remember what he said or did in that place as a public man."

Charles the First, to vindicate his outraged sovereignty, would have limited his utmost severity to "a petition expressing their sorrow that he was offended with them;" but these were not men, like children, to be frightened, or to be soothed by a weak parent. They courted the persecution, which with the people only served the more to maintain the principles for which they suffered. The patriots, obstinately contumacious, were committed to different prisons.

Charles the First, in his own mind, could only perceive their contumacy—it is only ourselves who now can admire their patriotism. The King sought to punish sedition—but in a conference he himself held with his Judges, they decided that the offences were not capital, the prisoners might be bailed, giving security for their good behaviour. The acknowledgment of Charles, though this decision was not to his mind, enters into his character. "I shall never be offended with my Judges if they deal plainly with me, and do not answer by oracles and riddles." Such a sentiment evinces no resolute tyranny in this monarch.

The parties were ready with their bail, but

they would give no security for their good behaviour. Selden raised his acute legal objections, and one of the members observed, that "the good behaviour was a ticklish point." What was "good behaviour?" Was it passive obedience? He preferred to return to prison than to accept a condition of which he did not know the nature. All were alike resolute in the refusal of any act of submission, and in the denial of the jurisdiction of any inferior court over Parliament. The judges, who had hitherto acted rightly, it was thought wrested the law now to the monarch's side, by decreeing heavy fines and imprisonment during the King's pleasure.

Arbitrary imprisonments, even in State-affairs, are so abhorrent to Englishmen, that this act of severity on the side of Charles the First, has been alleged as a striking evidence of his dispositions to tyranny. When we calmly look into the motives of the King—the state of the times—the as yet undefined rights of the liberty of the subject—the prevalent customs in European governments of imprisoning supposed state delinquents, and the extraordinary scenes which were passing in France, where the sacrifice of a few political victims, the heads of factions, had saved the feeble monarch on a

throne surrounded by conspiracies, when all these are considered, the severity of Charles the First will not appear with that dark and peculiar complexion, which a modern pencil might deeply colour. Charles had first intended to inflict the lenient penalty of a slight act of submission; but it was as impossible for the patriots to commit an act of submission, as for the monarch to be passive under his contemned sovereignty.

To allay the prevalent terror that the nation was now to be deprived of its Parliaments, Charles the First published "a declaration of the causes which moved him to dissolve this last Parliament." His tone is not arrogant—he gives an historical account of all their proceedings—their scanty subsidies—their persecutions on tonnage and poundage—their exorbitant encroachments—he reproaches those perturbators of the public peace, who have all along disturbed the harmony between him and the people—"like empirics who choose to have some diseases on foot to keep themselves in request, and to be employed in the cure." And lastly, the King appeals to the subject, whether, "in respect of the free passage of the gospel, in equal administration of justice, freedom from oppression, and the peace and quietness every

one enjoys under his own vine and fig-tree, the happiness of this nation can be paralleled by any neighbouring countries?" Had there been no truth in this appeal to the people, it would have been the most unskilful one possible.

So destitute was the sovereign now of means to pursue any foreign expedition, that after the fall of La Rochelle, when the Duke of Rohan implored his farther aid, Charles the First declared, that compelled to dissolve the Parliament, from whom he had expected farther supplies, he was no longer in a condition to assist the necessities of the foreign Protestants. The Parliament, in the result of their proceedings, had, doubtless contrary to their intentions, ably served the cause of France and Spain, with whom the King had to accede to an inglorious peace, after having waged a disastrous war. An English sovereign was now to reign deprived of his Parliament!

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST PATRIOTS.

SWIFT, in the spirit of his cynical philosophy, once drew up a catalogue of the *great* and *little* actions of some singular and renowned persons; and among the manuscripts of Bishop Kennett, I found a curious list of the infirmities of the best men in sacred writ. Moses was passionate, Abraham lied, Aaron was idolatrous, Sampson was a woman's slave, and the incredulity of Thomas, the persecutions of Paul, and the denial of Peter, enforced this extraordinary result of the infirmities of men, who, we might suppose, would have been exempt from ordinary weaknesses.

May we not therefore be forgiven, if we sometimes start at the tales of those romantic patriots, who, pure and exalted above the sphere of human passions, and often performing incredible or incomprehensible actions, so prodigally adorn the histories of the poetical Greeks,

and the declamatory Romans!* Our own age, among the annals of patriotism, can only boast of a single patriotic character, the grandeur of whose mind was circumscribed by his civic duties: the ambition of Washington terminated in the emancipation of his country. It would be delightful to trace patriotism in all its integrity, pursuing the noblest ends by the most irreproachable means—but too rare indeed are those great characters, who having opened the first scenes of political revolutions, have escaped the imputation of indulging their personal vanity, their private interest, or their boundless ambition.

We, who are feeling about for truth in the darkness of time, too often discover that secret history forms a contrast with the ideal greatness of our general views; and it is only the philosophical writer who can detect those indiscriminate opinions of men, and the affairs of men, which

* The learned Niebuhr has elaborately explored into the fabulous history of the Romans; he has been preceded by M. Beaufort, an ingenious writer, in his "Incertitude des cinq premiers Siecles de l'histoire Romaine;" but the Abbate Lancelloti, in his "Farfalloni degli Antichi Historici," would have had the merit of having first hostilely entered into this sacred land of imposture, had the dignity of genius sustained the erudition of the writer of "The Flim-Flams of Antiquity."

crowd the history of human nature with phantoms and delusions. Imperfect humanity claims our indulgence; and while we are often educing good from evil, we may surmise that it may require the leaven of personal motives to ferment *some minds* into patriotism. And if we be often compelled to explore into an origin more obscure and far less pure, than such elevated motives seem to promise, shall we not remain satisfied, if after tracing the stream back to its head, we behold it purifying itself as it flows, and enlarging its boundaries till even self seems forgotten in the public cause? We gladly accept the popular virtue, while we forget the private passion.

Cardinal de Retz is accused of indulging an unbounded ambition, yet in his own memoirs, though he frankly condemns many of his actions, he solemnly asserts, that in whatever regarded his political conduct, he was actuated by the noblest principles; nor is this impulse incompatible even with the indulgence of his ambition.

There are still persons, it seems, who will deny that the infirmities of our nature are discoverable in some of the early Reformers both at home and abroad;* and some, assuredly

* Mr. Wilberforce has condemned the historian Robertson for his phlegmatic philosophy in composing the history of

there are, who will not pardon us on any terms, when we assert that the popular leaders in the House of Commons, those great names in our history which posterity has invested with the purest of all national titles, that of Patriot, may lie open to the same accusation. The good, indeed, has survived the evil, and that is sufficient for the great ends of society; the heat and fury of the Reformation emancipated the human mind, and the factions of our early patriots, in many respects, laid the foundations of our popular Constitution. The only dangerous error, is the supposition that some men are more immaculate than our infirm passions can possibly permit, and that others were as criminal as they are made to be, for the purposes of party.

If even the great and good qualities of Pisistratus have been suspected to have disguised his love of arbitrary power; if the real motive of the French princes of the blood espousing the cause of the Huguenots has been traced to their own quarrel at Court; if Gibbon has thrown a

the Reformation, with an indifference incredible in a Divine, &c. &c. Surely it is not necessary at this day to write with all the heat of the times, caught from passions transient as the events which kindled them. These can no longer be suffered to associate with the dignity of truth.

shade of suspicion even over Brutus's "Godlike stroke;" if the assassin of Buckingham was a penitent and not a patriot; if even the patriotism of that great prince, Maurice of Orange, whom the people venerated as the hero who had rescued them from the Spanish tyranny, were stigmatised by the republican Barnevelt, as a cloak to his ambition; if the immortal Bacon, and the illustrious Clarendon, cannot escape from the taint of the meaner passions; and if that oracle of law, the great Coke, were of one mind as a judge, when in favour at Whitehall, and of another when discontented, he was a patriot at Westminster; we may, perhaps, feel more assured that it may serve both as matter of curiosity and instruction to open the more secret and complicate motives of the great actors in our history.

Nothing is more wanting in the history of this period, than the personal memoirs of some of the leaders in the Opposition. Such were Sir John Eliot, Dr. Turner, Sir Dudley Digges, Sir Arthur Haslerigg, Lord Say and Sele, St. John, Hampden, and Pym. Of these remarkable men, we know little but their Parliamentary history; something, however, we may glean from closer researches, and, perhaps, sufficient to serve us in these speculations on human nature.

On the patriotic party rising in the House of Commons, Charles the First acutely observed, that "it seemed to him that their aim was not so much against the abuses of power, as against power itself." To the King, the Oppositionists in the Commons seemed at times meditating insurrection; and the first race of our Patriots appeared to Charles the First, as the leaders of a faction conspiring to sacrifice the Sovereign, by casting him on an indigent throne. When long after the Monarch finally assembled the memorable "Long Parliament," and the second race of our Patriots arose, the same opinion probably with him lost nothing of its conviction.

Among the most eminent and the earliest of our patriots, and one who was, perhaps, the victim of his exertions, was Sir John Eliot, Vice-Admiral of Devonshire and Member for Cornwall. His extraordinary and unrelenting conduct in his prosecution of the minister whom he fastened on, as his solitary prey, with a terrible enmity which nothing could satiate short of life; his vehement eloquence, his gorgeous declamation, touched by such a hardiness of personal invective, and flowing with such embittered feelings, often induced me to suspect that the patriotism of this Junius

of another age, was unhappily connected with an antipathy to the individual. There was too large a proportion of personal rancour in Sir John Eliot's warm temper, and to say the least of it, it did not yield to the abundance of the patriotic spirit.

A genius so commanding and so turbulent, was fitted to be the leader of a party, or the creator of one. Sir John Eliot, the active enemy of Buckingham, we are informed, had early in life been his intimate companion; they had been fellow-travellers, and on the Duke's rise Eliot was not among the most silent of his adulators. His appointment as Vice-Admiral of Devonshire seems to connect itself with the patronage of the Lord High-Admiral of England. Mr. Eliot, as he was first styled, was a Cornish gentleman of a new family, and of a temper hot and irascible. He had a quarrel with his neighbours the Moyles, a family who long sat in Parliament; and it was in the hour of reconciliation, with wine before them, that Eliot treacherously stabbed the father in the back. On this barbarous irruption of passion, Eliot hastened to London to secure his pardon, under the protection of Buckingham. The pardon was refused, but a heavy fine commuted the criminal offence. When news arrived of

the recovery of Moyle from this attempted assassination, Eliot applied to the Duke for the remission of his fine, but in the impoverished Exchequer of that day a fine once paid was never recoverable from the gulph; besides, the crime, though ineffectual, had been committed. The only favour Eliot could obtain was a knighthood.*

In a letter of Sir John Eliot's to the Duke, so late as the close of 1623, there runs a strain of servile flattery and humble intercession, which strangely contrasts with that lofty spirit, and that personal indignation, with which Eliot shortly afterwards assailed his late friend and patron. This letter is important; it is evidence that Sir John Eliot had then "suffered a long imprisonment and great charge." Sir John declares that "he had served his Grace with all affection," and had "preserved the rights and liberties of the Duke, though with the loss of his own." All this obviously alludes to his official character as Vice-Admiral and as Chairman of the Committee of Stannaries,

* The story is too well authenticated to be omitted, in forming an idea of this remarkable character. Moyle survived the blow forty years, and with others of his family told the particulars to his grandson, Dr. Prideaux, the learned Dean of Norwich, from whom Eachard received it.

of which he has left a manuscript report. Sir John therefore "humbly craves his Grace's favour," which he appears to have forfeited; for he complains that some former letters addressed to the minister had remained unnoticed. The cause of his inveterate quarrel with Buckingham, though yet not distinctly known, would seem by this letter to have originated in the performance, or the transgression of some of his official duties.* Eliot unquestionably was of a fiery temperament—it had cast him into a most disgraceful predicament with the Moyles, and now we discover him in prison in 1623. The circumstance of being imprisoned, and his letters remaining unanswered by him, whose "rights" he had protected, display the most callous ingratitude, or the most absolute disavowal of Eliot's proceedings, whatever they might have been.* It is evident, however, that

* I am not acquainted with the exact nature of this office of Vice-Admiral; however, by a passage in a letter of Denzil Holles to Sir Thomas Wentworth, it is clear that he levied some fees for himself, as well as the Lord High-Admiral. "By that time my Lord Admiral and his Vice-Admirals be satisfied, and all other rights and wrongs be discharged, a slender gleaning is left for the taker." Holles alludes to the wrecks on the coast.—Strafford's Letters, i. 40.

† Rushworth, i. 213.

Eliot, on his side, had not broken with Buckingham in 1623. That Sir John Eliot was well known to the King, and often in the Royal circle, appears by Sir John's complaint in the Parliament at Oxford, in 1625, of six Romish priests being lately pardoned, which the Duke had prevailed upon the King to be done, *in his presence* at Hampton Court.* Eliot, like Sir Dudley Digges, was, in fact, "a great servant of the Duke's"†—and though Eliot did not, like the other orator, find his patriotism dissolve in place and pension, I wish that these patriots had found their patriotism at a greater distance from the Court.

The patriotic ardour which marks the character of Eliot, visited him like a sudden inspiration; and when he discovered that "that man," as he persisted in contemptuously designating the Minister, was "the Sejanus of England," and closely paralleled him with one of the most profligate royal favourites, in comparing him with the Bishop of Ely, in Richard the First's reign—when he impeached the Minister as "the canker of the King's treasure," and "the moth of all goodness in the State"—all this was a political revolution, which did not hap-

* Eachard, 422. † Rushworth, i. 450.

pen till two years after he had been a suppliant to this very Minister. I was not therefore surprised to learn that there exists in manuscript a collection of satires by Sir John Eliot, entitled "Verses, being chiefly *Invectives* against the Duke of Buckingham, to whom he bore a bitter and inveterate enmity." These "invectives," I presume, were poured out after his unanswered letters. Had those who have furnished us with this important fact affixed the dates of the periods when our political Juvenal composed his "invectives," or had they published these effusions, it might have thrown some light on the obscure commencement of Sir John Eliot's purer patriotism; that ambiguous point where personal malignity ceased, as public spirit broke out; but till we are satisfied on this head, we must still believe that the revolutionary genius has frequently disguised its private passions by its public conduct.

Sir John Eliot was a patriot who stood foremost in the ranks of opposition. Wentworth, afterwards the famous Earl of Strafford, opened his political life under the banner of that party; but whether either of these great leaders were too haughty to follow the other, or whether Wentworth disdained the violence and turbulence of Eliot, their opinions frequently clashed,

and they aimed at each other such keen retorts, that their emulation, if it ever were emulation, terminated in personal antipathy. In the House, these leaders of party were both first-rates, and it is curious to observe how minds of such calibre can exercise themselves with equal force, in mutual depreciation, till, in the illusion of their jealousy, they persuade themselves that they really feel that contempt for each other, which their style infers. Wentworth, alluding to his old rival, then no more, degrades him into "a phantastic apparition;" had Eliot lived, Strafford would have found the "apparition" as substantial a foe, as the one he afterwards witnessed in that political Elisha, PYM, who had caught up the inspiring mantle of the departed. When Wentworth of the North betrayed symptoms of wavering indecision, and when at length "the northern cock was picked out to be the King's creature," by the Lord Treasurer Weston, Hacket tells us, that "it was the general opinion of the times," that Eliot, irascible at the choice of his rival, avenged himself on the King in the bill of Tonnage and Poundage; falling on the Treasurer and declaring with his accustomed petulance, since Buckingham was no more, that the Lord Treasurer was "the author of all the

evils which oppressed the kingdom." Weston, however, had not been six months in office, but he appears to have dreaded his redoubtable adversary. Bishop Williams, who had then his spies abroad, in order to still the quaking statesman, and make his own court, proffered, in many private conferences, "to bring Sir John Eliot to be reconciled to him and rest his servant." Hacket, to whom Williams imparted this manœuvring, adds, that Wentworth never forgave our intriguing Bishop for having offered to bring over his rival.* Our latest writer, Mr. Hallam, catches fire at the degrading insinuation. "The magnanimous fortitude of Eliot forbids us to give credit to any surmise unfavourable to his glory upon such indifferent authority; but several passages in Wentworth's letters to Laud show his malice towards one who had perished in the great cause which he had so basely forsaken."† This remark requires some animadversion. At this time there was much tempering with the patriotic party, and several of the great leaders were gained over by the court. Williams might have offered to do that, in respect to Eliot, which he could not have effected. Eliot had

* Scrinia Reserata, part ii. 82.

† Hallam's Constitutional History, i. 498.

gone too far ever to return; and the King could never have endured the presence of one who had become personally offensive to him. The statement of Bishop Williams is after his own manner; unquestionably he was long and secretly connected with the patriotic party, and what he tells of a rival's anger in Wentworth, is a strong confirmation of this political project, for we are now perfectly acquainted with Wentworth's personal dislike to Eliot; this we see is confessed even by Mr. Hallam himself. Mr. Hallam indeed is no inconstant lover of truth; there is an honourable candour even in the partialities of his passions; his philosophical mind disdains to conceal what he likes not to have learnt; hence we often find, as in the present instance, that his notes sometimes furnish an answer to his text. Why did he leave to me the ungracious task of dimming "the glory" of a great Patriot?

Mr. Hallam has justly ascribed to Eliot "magnanimity of fortitude." The story of the last sad hours of his imprisonment and his life have not yet been disclosed to the world. His ardent spirit remained unbroken—though it waxed "faint and feeble," as he himself pathetically expressed it.

The last imprisonment of Eliot for his con-

duct in Parliament was in 1629, when he was condemned to be imprisoned during the King's pleasure, and fined in two thousand pounds. On this occasion, he sent an upholsterer to the Tower, "to trim up convenient lodgings," convinced that his visit would be no short one. Concerning his fine, he said, that "He had two cloaks, two suits, two pair of boots, and gallashees, and a few books, and that was all his personal substance, and if they could pick up two thousand pounds out of that, much good might it do them." He added, that "when he had first been a close prisoner in the Tower, a commission was directed to the High Sheriff of Cornwall, and five other commissioners, his capital enemies, to inquire into his lands and goods, and to seize upon them for the King, but they returned a nihil."* It therefore follows, either that means had been resorted to, to screen his property; or which I suspect, that Eliot was a man of ruined fortunes.

In January 1631–2, I find Sir John Eliot removed into a new lodging (in the Tower), and that his lawyer assured Pory the letter-writer, that he had found Sir John "the same cheerful healthful undaunted man than ever." Sir John's lawyer appears to have had too much at

* Harleian MSS. 7050.

heart the glory of the patriotic champion in the person of his client, to have perceived what Eliot's physicians reported in the October of that year, that "he could never recover of his consumption, unless he might breathe purer air." Lord Chief Justice Richardson in reply, observed, that "Though Sir John was brought low in body, yet was he as high and lofty in mind as ever; for he would neither submit to the King, nor the justice of that Court." The Bench recommended Sir John to petition his Majesty.

The mode of Sir John Eliot's proceedings were told by Lord Cottington to a friend of the present letter-writer. Sir John first presented a petition to the King by the hand of the Lieutenant of the Tower, to this effect. "Sir, your Judges have committed me to prison in the Tower of London, where by reason of the quality of the air, I am fallen into a dangerous disease. I humbly beseech your Majesty will command your judges to set me at liberty, that for recovery of my health I may take some fresh air." His Majesty's answer was—"It was not humble enough." Sir John then prepared another petition to be presented by his son—"Sir, I am certainly sorry to have displeased your Majesty, and having

so said, do humbly beseech you once again to command your judges to set me at liberty, that when I have recovered my health, I may return back to my prison, there to undergo such punishment as God hath allotted unto me." On this the Lieutenant came and expostulated with Sir John, insisting that it belonged to his office, and was common to no man else, to deliver petitions for his prisoners; and if Sir John, in a third petition, would humble himself to His Majesty in acknowledging his fault, and craving pardon, he would willingly deliver it, and made no doubt that he should obtain his liberty.

To this Eliot answered, "I thank you, Sir, for your friendly advice, but my spirits are grown feeble and faint, which, when it please God to restore to their former vigour, I will take it farther into my consideration."

In the next month Eliot was no more. He died in the Tower on the 27th of November, 1632.* His son petitioned the King that he would permit the body of his ill-fated father to be conveyed to Cornwall, but the King's answer, written at the foot of the petition was, "Let Sir John Eliot's body be buried in the

* Anthony Wood erroneously conjectured that he died about 1629.

church of that parish where he died." He was buried in the chapel of the Tower. Thus it appears that this uncompromising spirit perished in a prison from a haughty delicacy on his side at the punctilious interference of the official man, who probably felt little sympathy for his illustrious prisoner, and who appears to have aimed at humiliating the elevated mind of the Patriot by reiterated humble petitions. The severity which the King exercised against Eliot, is very particular. Charles the First, often hasty and austere, from his temperament, has been accused of deficient tenderness in his nature by certain party-writers; their object is to represent Charles the First as a heartless tyrant; but the facts which they have attempted to allege, are so trivial and nugatory, that they are become rather the testimonies of their own cruelty, than of his. The harshness of Charles the First towards Eliot, to me indicates a cause of offence, either of a deeper dye, or of a more personal nature, than, perhaps, we have yet discovered.*

* These particulars of the death of Sir John Eliot I have drawn from manuscript letters in the Harleian collection, 7000. Mr. Belsham informed me, that at Port Eliot there is a portrait of Sir John, holding a comb in his hand, which circumstance Mr. Belsham imagined indicated his neglected

The implication of the King's connivance with Buckingham, in the affair of the plaister and potion given to James the First, as, I think, was so understood at the time, when Eliot abruptly broke off with an invidious quotation from Cicero, in a like case, "which he feared to speak and feared to think," was not likely ever to be forgotten by the King. We now know who asserted, that in comparing Buckingham to Sejanus, Eliot, by implication, must mean that he was Tiberius.

state during his imprisonment in the Tower. But since Sir John was allowed to send his own upholsterer to furnish his apartment, and as it is not probable his son would suffer his father to remain destitute, this odd accompaniment must allude to some circumstance not likely now to be recovered. It is extraordinary that we should have no print of Sir John Eliot, and that our hunters after portraits of eminent men, have not prayed for a copy of this Patriot. I am told the countenance betrays that silent consumption which saps unseen.

Sir John desired that his posterity should preserve this portrait as a perpetual memorial of his hatred of tyranny, added my communicator, who also mentioned that 100,000*l.* had been offered for his bail; a circumstance of which my researches afford no evidence. It seems to me too like the round sum of a modern estimate, vast, indeed, for one whose estate was declared to be a *nihil.* As Eliot was condemned to be imprisoned at the pleasure of the King, I do not see how any bail could be tendered.

The idea which Charles the First entertained of Eliot, we may perhaps learn from another circumstance. On the dissolution of the third Parliament,* which broke up in a tumult, and which cast the public mind into a violent ferment, a proclamation was issued against "the spreaders of false rumours," in which we find this remarkable passage: "As if the scandalous and seditious proposition in the House of Commons, *made by an outlawed man, desperate in mind and fortune,* had been the vote of the whole House." Who can this man be, so forcibly designated, but Sir John Eliot, whom we have seen at that eventful moment prepared with those propositions which were carried in a tumult? Rushworth, who in giving this proclamation, has cautiously omitted this personal stroke, no doubt well knew its object; and it is one instance of many, where the Clerk of the House of Commons has been too tender of the feelings of his contemporaries and his masters, who had then passed a considerable vote to honour the memory of Sir John Eliot, and to remunerate the losses of his family.†

* 1629.

† Rushworth gives the passage, ii. 3. "As if the scandalous and seditious proposition in the House of Commons had

As the judges on that occasion particularised Eliot as the "greatest offender and the ringleader," and sentenced him to a far heavier fine than Hollis and Valentine, with unlimited imprisonment, "this man, desperate in mind and fortune," could only have been himself! Why Eliot should have been designated as "an outlawed man" may excite our curiosity; that description seems to allude either to his former imprisonments, to his attempt at assassination, or to some other irregular conduct, to which the ungovernable passions of Eliot appear to have often hurried him.*

During his long imprisonment in the Tower, Sir John Eliot found, as other impetuous spirits have, that wisdom and philosophy have hidden themselves behind the bars of a prison window; there, his passions weaker, and his

been the vote of the whole House." It is in *Rymer's Fœdera*, xix. 62. that we recover the suppressed passage.

* Sir John Eliot was harassed by many years of frequent imprisonments and fines, and not always, as we see, for political objects. When the House of Commons voted 5000*l.* for a compensation to the family for his "sufferings," they also voted another 2000*l.*, part of four, for which he had been fined by the Court of Wards, by reason of his marriage with Sir Daniel Norton's daughter. This, I suppose, indicates another species of activity and resolution of this bold and adventurous character.

contemplation more profound, he nobly employed himself, on an elaborate treatise on "The Monarchy of Man." *

The active supporter of Eliot was the perturbed Dr. TURNER, member for Shrewsbury, whom Wotton calls "a travelled doctor of plague, of bold spirit and of able elocution, returned one of the burghesses, which was not ordinary in any of his coat." He appears to have been elected for his hardy activity. I discovered that he was one, as he himself declared, of an association who had agreed to disperse themselves through the country, to exert all their influence to thwart the measures of Government; announcing, by inflammatory letters, that "The day was fast approaching when such work was to be wrought in England, as never was the like, which will be for our good." So presciently some of this party viewed the scenes which, fifteen years afterwards, opened on the nation. If we incline to admire this perambulating patriotism, and pass by, without ridicule, these politicians on post-horses, we must own that the motive dwindles considerably in our esteem, when we learn that the said Dr. Turner had long haunted the

* See note at the end of this chapter.

Court, but had been contemptuously treated by the King, for his deficient veracity. We confess that we little value the patriot made out of a discarded place-hunter; a man who hates the Court because the Court does not love him.

Among the second race of our patriots appears HAMPDEN and PYM; consecrated names! We know at present too little of the secret history of these remarkable men, to venture to develope the motives of their conduct. The intentions of men may, however, be purer than their practices, for between our intentions and our practices, our little and our great passions may intervene.

Hampden passed his early years in the lighter dissipations of society. He had taken no degree at the University, but he studied the municipal law at the Inns of Court. He appears "to have retired to a more reserved and melancholy society;" thus Lord Clarendon describes a more select and more studious class of minds, without, however, losing his natural vivacity and "flowing courtesy to all men." Hampden at length settled into an independent country-gentleman—and in his retirement, but this we can only conjecture, must have meditated on some theory of politics. It is only on this principle that we can account for the extraordinary design

which he aimed at, of overturning the whole government of England. Anthony Wood asserts that Hampden was "a person of anti-monarchical principles." I would not depend on honest Anthony's account of any man's principles, but in this instance I am of Anthony's opinion. I do not decide so much on the general conduct of Hampden, as from the remarkable intimacy which existed between him and his cousin, Oliver Cromwell; remarkable, because it enabled the penetrating sagacity of the student of Davila to predict to Lord Digby, pointing to Cromwell, that "that sloven, if we ever should come to a breach with the King—which God forbid!—in such a case, I say, that that sloven will be the greatest man in England." Cromwell, in his famous canting answer, full of what he calls, "a way of foolish simplicity," at the conference about his "kingship," particularly alludes to Hampden, his former great friend, as having been a "hid instrument to help him on this work." The deep and reciprocal sympathy of these bosom friends most evidently indicates the same counsels, the same conduct, and the same great, but concealed, design.

Hampden lives in the unfading colours of the most forcible of portrait-painters, the majestic Clarendon. Who will deny that he pos-

sessed that greatness of mind and character, and which suffered no diminution from an early death, capable of inspiring the most elevated patriotism? The feelings of two ages attest the greatness of Hampden's name. Charles the First acknowledged his eminent character, when the King, on hearing of the fatal accident which terminated his career (the bursting of his own overcharged pistol in the field of battle), offered his own surgeon to preserve the life of his hostile subject; and such was Hampden's enduring fame, that when one of his descendants was deficient in his public accounts at a late period, that public peculator found the name of Hampden was a talisman of patriotism; and in the fervour of that day, he was not prosecuted, in reverence of the name which he had so unworthily inherited.

It must be confessed, that though England has had no Plutarch to interest us by the charm of his details, our country does not want for subjects, particularly in the revolutionary age which now engages our attention. But the literary genius of these times had not yet reached to the philosophy of biography; heroes were not wanting, but the immortalising pen. The great character before us, found no friend in that day to send down to us the

slightest memorial of the man, and curious collectors in physiognomy or in politics, cannot even show us his portrait.

The only anecdote we find to record of Hampden, is the peculiar manner which he observed in speaking in Parliament. He considered that to speak last in an able debater, was an advantage almost equal to a victory. Hampden invited his opponents to exhaust their arguments in the first opening of the debate; and if he found those of his own side worsted, his dexterous sagacity brought down less controvertible ones. The single opinion of Hampden had that weight in Parliament, that however the majority inclined, they suspected, if he were not in their number, the force of their own reasonings, and would not trust to their own conviction; they either adopted his opinions, or adjourned the debate. And at the next meeting, the artful orator, or the active partisan, had mustered new forces, and thus "by perplexing the weaker, and tiring out the acuter judgments, Hampden rarely failed to attain his ends."* He ex-

* I discovered this *trait* in the Parliamentary character of HAMPDEN, in Francis Osborne's works on "Government," sect. 31. It is curious to observe, that Lord Clarendon has not omitted some notice of it in his character of this patriot.

celled in the most subtile arts of debate. An admirable scholar, skilful not only in the choice and weight of his own significant expressions, but dexterous when a question was about to be put contrary to his purpose, in neutralising its object, by slipping in some qualifying term or equivocal word.

How often has the inquiry been agitated, whether a terrible ambition was not concealed under the public virtues and powerful faculties of the patriot Hampden? "It belongs not to an historian of this age, scarcely even to an intimate friend, positively to determine," said our inimitable and philosophic Hume; but Hume has himself determined it, by his acute penetration in the note to his text, which, like the postscript of a mistress, contains the real purport of the letter.

Hampden has been described by our last authority, Dr. Lingard, as by preceding writers, to have been "quiet, courteous, and submissive." At first he was one of the party who had prepared themselves for voluntary banishment; but whether this great man bore his faculties so meekly, may be a subject of

Either his Lordship borrowed it from Osborne, or this peculiarity of Hampden's must have been notorious in his day. The other is furnished by Sir Philip Warwick.

future inquiry. I have been informed of papers, in the possession of a family of the highest respectability, which will show that Hampden had long lived in a state of civil warfare with his neighbour, the Sheriff of the county; —they mutually harassed each other. It is probable that these papers may relate to quarrels about levying the sixpence in the pound on Hampden's estate for which he was "cessed." It is from the jealousy of truth that we are anxious to learn, whether the sixpence was refused out of pique to his old enemy and neighbour the Sheriff, or from the purest, unmixed patriotism? I must own too, that it is with difficulty that we can form a notion of Dr. Lingard's "quiet, courteous, and submissive" gentleman, in him, who, in the breaking out of the civil wars with Charles the First, made Davila's history of the civil wars in France his manual. Hampden, at least, meditated on what he had resolved should happen. And never was there a man of the "quiet" temper and "submissive" disposition of Hampden, who was a more intrepid hero, when he drew his sword to shed the blood of half the nation! Clarendon has declared, that "no one was less the man he seemed to be, which shortly afterwards appeared, when he cared less to keep on

the mask." The truth is, as we ourselves have witnessed in Revolutionary France, and as may be observed in the same characters which have appeared in the same scenes in the yet unwritten history of the terrible revolution in South America, that men naturally of calm tempers, and even of polished manners, change their character as if by magic, in the madness of their political passions. And this striking fact in the history of man, was noticed even by Lord Clarendon himself; who, though he was severe on the individual Hampden, was perfectly just in his deep knowledge of human nature. Alluding to the first meeting of the Long Parliament, which elated many of the members, he tells us, that "the same men who, six months before were observed to be of very moderate tempers, and to wish that gentle remedies might be applied, talked now in another dialect of things and persons. They must now not only sweep the house clean below, but must pull down all the cobwebs which hung in the top and corners, that they might not breed dust, and so make a foul house hereafter, and to remove all grievances, were for pulling up the excesses of them by the roots."* And we must add "the branches"—they natu-

* Clarendon, i. 298.

rally began to lop "the branches;" for such was the radical spirit of Hampden, that he joined a party who were distinguished by the popular political designation of "Root-and-branch-Men."

The integrity of Hampden's principles, and his self-devotion to the public cause, to say the least, lost something of their purity in their progress. Whatever might have been the integrity of the Patriot, it was involved in dark intrigues, and degraded by an ambition which often betrayed the partisan and the demagogue. When we view Hampden at the head of his Buckinghamshire men, inciting several thousands to present petitions, we may doubt whether this instigation were patriotism or insurrection. His repeated journeys to Scotland, his secret conferences at home, indicated the active plotter. Once, when it was observed to him, that men had grown weary of such perpetual renewals of alarm, concerning the state of religion, while the civil grievances appeared much less to occupy their attention, the subtle intriguer replied, that "if it were not for this reiterated cry about religion, they could never be certain of keeping the people on their side." Was this a lesson which he had learnt in Davila? It was not unworthy of "the Prince" whom Machiavel has painted.

In that projected coalition of the patriots with the King's friends, which was frustrated by the sudden death of the Earl of Bedford, we can view only a scheme of political ambition. "The men of the people" hastened to take possession of their seats in the cabinet, driving away the ministry of Charles, some by flight, some by intimidation, some by compounding. Hampden here acted a remarkable part. The patriot demanded to be instituted the governor of the Prince. I would not infer, notwithstanding this egotistical complacency, that the great mind of Hampden would not have sown the seeds of patriotism in a patriot King. He might have taught "the Prince" the business of life as well as its pleasures; even Lord Bolingbroke would have promised this; but as in one case the tutor might have brought in a Stuart, so in the other he might have educated a root-and-branch Reformer.

This attempt at the governorship of the Prince is said to have been intended as a means to keep the son as a hostage for the father. Thus the monarch was to be the only person in the kingdom bound up hand and foot on a throneless throne. He was to be a phantom of state, whose title was to hold the people in subjection to the sole will and absolute power

of the great and ambitious mind, which frames a new government,—or to use Hampden's own express words, the monarch was "to commit himself and all that is his" to the care of Hampden and his friends. The future monarch was to become a royal Hampden; the English nation was to have been Hampdenised; and the British Constitution was to terminate in some political empiricism. Is it possible that Hampden resembled the Abbé Sieyes in his facility of drawing up constitutions? Were the English people to be the victims of forms of government mutable as the passions of party would dictate, or puppets of the Commonwealth of Utopia?

Pym, formerly a clerk in the Exchequer, but who, in the projected flight into the cabinet, was to have been appointed its Chancellor, stood at the head of the patriotic, or, if we are to settle the style from the conduct of himself and party, we should rather say the revolutionary party. One would have wished that the man whose character has incurred the taint of a suspicion of having taken a heavy bribe from the French minister,* had been graced with purer hands, and had less merited

* I write this down from recollection, and cannot immediately recover my authority.

the *sobriquet* of "King Pym," a title with which he was hailed from his retentive grasp of power. Nor can we consider that our patriot stands before us in all the dignity of the character, when we find him addressing with such political gallantry a mob of women, huddled together in those petitioning times when "apprentices" and "porters," and even "beggars," complained that they had been long great sufferers by the bishops and the lords!—and which, with other prepared mobs, so forcibly remind us of the French Jacobins, and the Poissardes and Sans-culottes of Paris. Nor does King Pym rise in dignity when we find him condescending to give out the artful rumour, and the lying scandal; nor when we view him with the barbarism of brute despotism locking up the doors of the House of Commons, and flying with indecent haste to the Lords, to bring up the impeachment of Strafford, before Strafford should impeach him; nor when, with the inhuman cry of faction, he screamed on Charles's consent to the Earl's death—"Has he given up Strafford? then he can deny us nothing;" nor afterwards, when on the King's consent to make him Chancellor of the Exchequer, immediately lowering his tone, and changing his style in the House,

he made some overtures to provide for the glory and the splendour of the Crown.*

Pym, it is supposed, hastened his death, a prey to the unremitting exertions and constant anxieties of the last three years of his life. Of such ambitious patriotism, which keeps not "the even tenor of its way," but often trembles lest a single morning should sweep away its usurped government of intrigue, and to such a patriot the tormented creature of his own designs, who has to confide to the perfidious, to work on the worst men, and to seduce the weakest, and to flatter all; since no man is too mean to be courted, no arts too base to be practised, by those who condescend to degrade their patriotism by adopting the deceptions and setting in motion the manœuvres of a faction—of such a sort of patriotism, and to such a sort of patriot, may we not say, "of making many *plots* there is no end, and much *revolution* is a weariness of the flesh?"

Whether Pym be too deeply calumniated, I

* Clarendon, vi. 439. It must have been then that Pym declared in the House that they would make the King the richest King in all Christendom; and that they had no other intention but that he should continue their King to govern them, and pressed that he might have Tonnage and Poundage granted him by act of Parliament.—Nalson, i. 569.

will not decide, but he was game for all seasons for the royal wits, and stands more frequently the hero of their political libels or songs than any other character. In the year he died (1643), he conceived it absolutely necessary to publish "a vindication of his own conduct," to clear himself from "the fame-wounding aspersions of his reputation." In this curious document he denied the charge of being "the man who had begot and fostered all the lamented distractions now rife in the kingdom." It appears, what Clarendon indeed confirms, that he was not hostile to the Ecclesiastical Government; he had only resisted perverse bishops, "who had wrested religion, like a waxen nose, to the furtherance of their ambitious purposes, till they despaired of holding any longer their usurped authority." In respect to the conduct he observed towards the King, I give his own words: "But this is but a mole-hill to that mountain of scandalous reports that have been inflicted on my integrity to his sacred Majesty; some boldly averring me for the author of the present distractions between his Majesty and his Parliament, when I take God, and all who know my proceedings, to be my vouchers that I neither directly nor indirectly ever had a thought tending to the least disobedience or

disloyalty to his Majesty, whom I acknowledge my lawful King and Sovereign, and would expend my blood as soon in his service as any subject he hath. I never harboured a thought which tended to any disservice to his Majesty, nor ever had an intention prejudicial to the State. I will endure these scandals with patience, and when God in his great mercy shall at last reconcile his Majesty to his high Court of Parliament, I doubt not to give his royal self (though he be much incensed against me) a sufficient account of my integrity."

What man but would exult in the self-conviction of such irreproachable integrity? Who could imagine that such a patriot would not be respected even by his enemies? But some of his contemporaries, who were the witnesses of his actions, could not judge so well of his intentions. They knew of those daily artifices of faction practised by "King Pym;" the mobs he assembled, or dispersed by his agents; the petitions that were begged or forged; the rumours of conspiracies; the prodigality of promises to all, for all they desired; never was the multitude so wheedled or so frightened! Pym acknowledges "his lawful King and Sovereign" in his Vindication: had he forgotten that two years before, he had told, as a friend, to

the Earl of Dover, that "If he looked for preferment, he must comply with the Parliament in their ways, and not hope to have it by serving the King?" Pym declares "that he would expend his blood as soon in serving his Sovereign as any he hath." This was after he had chaced that Sovereign from his palace!

When we have read the vindication of Pym, and consider that there were others, as well as himself, who could as reasonably accommodate their conscience to their actions, and look on their intentions rather than their intrigues, we must conclude that Fate, inexorable Fate, had intervened between the King and his people!—Unhappy Charles! No sovereign it seems possessed more loyal subjects, as the Parliamentary addresses always insist on, subjects more prompt to shed their blood for their King, as Pym declares, at the very moment they had drawn their swords against him! Unhappy people! who possessed a King who had their prosperity at heart, and their glory ever before him, while he was blasting the one, and obscuring the other, and was treated as an arbitrary tyrant! I do not know that the whole history of mankind can parallel such an involved and cruel predicament as this in which a sovereign stood with his subjects.

The Earl of Manchester, the famous Lord Mandeville and Kimbolton, who was so intimately acquainted with the secrets of his party, has told one, in those fragments of his memoirs which have been fortunately preserved by Nalson. Our patriots had so terrified Lord Cottington, that to save himself he had recourse to that prudent, if not subtle way of stripping himself of his skin to save his life. He knew that the Mastership of the Wards was a place of that value and power as might stop the mouths of his voracious enemies. He cast it to the sullen Lord Say and Sele, the haughty head of the revolutionary party; who as intent to repair his own shattered fortunes, as those of the commonweal, found his patriotism melt away in this honeyed morsel of the mastership of the wards. The policy of Cottington, it appears, was successful, for while many were baiting him in hopes of his place, the instant it was disposed of to one of the party, all criminal aspersions were laid aside, and the displaced Cottington was suffered to retire in quiet.*

* It is much to be regretted that these Memoirs of the Earl of Manchester are only known to us by some excerpts of Nalson. The manuscript was lent him by Dudley, Lord North. Nothing can be more interesting in the history of these times than the memoirs of an able man, who had acted so important a part in them.

Sir Arthur Haslerigg, the fierce exterminator of the Bishops, gorged on the fatness of three great manors, and the fruitfulness of deaneries and chapel-lands. When these patriots were in possession of their plenary power, we find them voting large pensions to themselves. We are now well acquainted with their incessant meetings and cabals at home, and with the journeys of Hampden and Pym and others, to concert those measures in Scotland in which they so successfully laboured. Had the Earl of Strafford been suffered to have lived, the evidence would not have been wanting to the public; it had already been furnished to the unhappy monarch whom it drove into despair and error. But I am anticipating events which will fall naturally into the progress of our history.

We shall hardly need the lantern of the cynic to discover whether we have at length found the perfect patriot, who from our school-days so many are taught to recognise in these illustrious personages. Had they no other designs, at times, than the redress of their "grievances?" A by-stander may reasonably suspect that with some, patriotism may either be produced by ambition, or may generate it.

If it be our lot to detect low artifices and dark machinations in the actions of Patriots, shall we suppress the truths which the world has concealed? It is a zealous labour to lift the veil from past time; it would be an useless one, if we fail in the courage, to assert the truths which are our proud possession. We are mortified that these men, however great, compromised the dignity of the hallowed character with which the world has invested them; the elevation of their style, and the purity of their professed honour, sometimes strangely contrast with their deeds and secret thoughts; and sometimes too, their ambiguous conduct may induce the cynic to sneer and the sceptic to doubt, when these cold and narrow spirits should be taught only to blush.

That all the Patriots were as guilty as the heads of their party, I am far from believing. There were honest men among them who were earnest for the redress of grievances, but whose names, were they inscribed on a muster-roll, would remain unknown to us. Baxter,* who was no doubt well informed in the secret history of the times, when he mentions the preferments accepted by the patriots we have noticed, adds that there were others who "would

* Baxter's Narrative of his Life and Times, p. 25. fo.

accept of no preferment, lest they should be thought to seek themselves, or set their fidelity to sale."

Of these two classes of Patriots, it must be confessed, that vast is the interval which separates them; but it is with political business as with military affairs, the officers, and not the men, create revolutions.

NOTE ON SIR JOHN ELIOT'S MANUSCRIPT TREATISE.

This manuscript has been preserved among the Harleian MSS. 2228, with this title, "The Monarchie of Man. A Treatise philosophicale and morale wherein some questions of the Politicks are obviously discust. · By Sir John Eliot, Knt. prisoner in the Tower." With this motto from Virgil:

"Deus nobis hæc otia fecit."

It was in the leisure of a prison, as Eliot nobly adopts the *otia* of Virgil to his situation, that he composed this learned treatise, consisting of 240 folio pages. It has been considered by Mrs. Macauley as a political work; but it is rather an ethical one. It yields no indication of republican principles, the writer maintaining, that monarchy, formed, as it were, on the prototype of the Creator himself, is the perfection of government; any allusion to his own times is made with equal moderation and caution. "How far laws should influence Princes," he says, "is a question involved in difficulties—the prerogative of Kings is a point so tender as it will hardly bear a mention. We may not therefore handle it with any roughness, lest it reflect some new beam of terror on ourselves. To show that Kings are subject to laws, were not, he says, a task of hardness, if the danger did not exceed the trouble."

The treatise discovers all the tedious scholastic learning of that period, perpetual references to Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Plutarch, and Bodin. The freest thinkers had not yet emancipated themselves from plodding in the tracks of authority, and Eliot, who was so bold a speaker in the English senate, when warmed by English feelings, with his classical pen, dares not write a page without what he calls—"the strength and assistance of authority." Did he imagine that the English Constitution was to originate among the dreamers of the ancient philosophers?

"The Monarchy of Man" is an ethical much more than a political work. Wearied by wrestling with "the mystery of the King's prerogative," the contemplative prisoner and philosopher looked into the monarchy of the Stoics—the self-government of Man. He closes his work by a passage of singular eloquence, an elaborate eulogy on the Independence of the Mind. It reminds one of the magnificence of Bolingbroke, when he also occasionally elevated his imagination to the superior wisdom and the superior virtue of a disciple of the Porch.

Eliot having shown, that man is excelled by other animals, in many of his best faculties, proceeds:

"Man only was left naked, without strength or agility to preserve him from the danger of his enemies, multitudes exceeding him in either, many in both, to whom he stood obnoxious and exposed, having no resistance, no avoidance for their furies, but in this case and necessity, to relieve him upon this oversight of Nature's, Prometheus, that wise statesman, whom Pandora could not cousen, having the present apprehension of the danger, by his quick judgment and intelligence, secretly passed into Heaven, steals out a fire from thence, infuses it into Man, by that inflames his mind with a divine spirit and wisdom, and therein gives him a full

supply for all; for all the excellence of the creatures he had a far more excellence in this; this one was for them all, no strength nor agility could match it; all motions and abilities came short of this perfection; the most choice arms of Nature have their superlative in its acts; all the arts of Vulcan and Minerva have their comparative herein, in this divine fire and spirit, this supernatural influence of the mind, all excellence organical is surpassed; it is the transcendent of them all; nothing can come to match it, nothing can impeach it, but man therein is an absolute master of himself, his own safety and tranquillity by God, (for so we must remember the Ethics did express it,) are made dependant on himself, and in that self-dependence, in the neglect of others, in the entire rule and dominion of himself, the affections being composed, the actions so directed, is the perfection of our government, that *summum bonum* in philosophy, the *bonum publicum* in our policy, the true end and object of this *Monarchy of Man.*"

CHAPTER XII.

ORIGIN OF THE ANTI-MONARCHICAL PRINCIPLE IN MODERN EUROPE.

It has been recently considered by an eminent writer, that the passion for "republican politics," was so unknown to us, that "at the meeting of the Long Parliament, we have not the slightest cause to suppose that any party, or any number of persons, among its members, had formed what must then have appeared so extravagant a conception." Our ardent writer, therefore, conceives that the year 1645, is that to which we must refer the appearance of a republican party in considerable numbers, though *not yet among the House of Commons.*"*

It must be observed, that it harmonises with the preconceived system of Mr. Hallam, to assign so late a period for the appearance of the Republicans in this country, in order to enforce his principle, that in the King's own

* Hallam's Constitutional History of England.

conduct, we are to look for the true origin of Republicanism, or rather the anti-monarchical spirit. Still, however, in the wide circuit of his reading on this subject, Mr. Hallam must have received some indistinct notions, that the genius of Republicanism was abroad, and no stranger in this country,—and with that candour which his ample knowledge often exerts, we may here observe how the historian admits Truth unadorned as he finds her, up the back-stairs, although he sometimes dresses her to his own taste, for the more public audience. Hence it is that the text and the notes of the Constitutional History so often differ; in the text, the author's particular feeling is prevalent, and in the notes all his knowledge to complete the subject, however often the annotation may stand in opposition to the text. He thus acknowledges "that a very few speculative men, by the study of antiquity, or by observations on the prosperity of Venice and Holland, might be led to an abstract preference of republican politics." And what is more extraordinary, Mr. Hallam has himself discovered in the House of Commons, at the moment he tells us, that the spirit of "Republicanism had not yet appeared there," several leading members, whose republican sentiments are unques-

tionable; and many are to be added to that number.

To me it seems that the genius of Democracy had long before been busied in this country, and that the period which Mr. Hallam has assigned for its sudden birth, is about that of its growth and stature, as well in the place in which he says it did not yet appear, as in others where it had also shown itself.

The ill-disguised republic of ducal Venice, under a haughty and merciless aristocracy, however prominent at this time in the intrigues of European cabinets, offered no model of a popular government to our fierce democratic spirits. The dark mysteries of that artificial government could only be maintained by the intricacy of its movements, silence, secrecy, and assassination! The dispatches of their ambassadors differed from others; these men were the busy-bodies of the diplomatic corps—political panders to the restless passions of their Lords, whose Government seemed to exist more by cunning and watchfulness, than by real force or true greatness. Astute spies in all foreign Courts, though feeble, and timid, by their unceasing communications among themselves, they were masters of the secrets of the Cabinets of Europe, could foresee approaching wars, or detect exhausted

enmities, so that they were at all times ready to afford the ally they courted their private intelligence, or their timely mediation—but the word "Liberty" was not whispered by a Venetian even at a distance from the lion's mouth.

With the Flemings, indeed, our country had from the earliest times formed an uninterrupted intercourse, and when the Netherlanders aspired to throw off the yoke of the Spaniard and the Inquisition, never did two nations so fraternally sympathize in the same unity of interests. So closely connected were the two countries, that the burgher of Antwerp, or Amsterdam, was often a resident in London.

The Flemish factor Meteren, who stole many an hour from his meals and his sleep to build up the mighty tome of his nation's history, often passing and repassing from Antwerp, long sojourned and finally died in England. A witness of the Marian persecution, and of the extended reign of Elizabeth, and even of a part of that of James the First, he has chronicled many curious details of our own domestic history not elsewhere to be found. So strict was the union of the commonalty of the two people, that it seemed as if one country had two languages. If in this great national intercourse we some-

times adopted their idioms, we also caught their less refined manners, which has been observed by the antiquary Camden, the satirist Nash, and other contemporary writers. Our nation had combated for the Hollanders, and they had struck medals to commemorate the destruction of that fleet, so proudly called the Armada, which had threatened the English shores.

We must however observe, that the republic of the United Provinces had not been founded on republican principles. In their extreme necessity, they had first offered themselves to a French Prince, and at length humbly proffered the sovereignty of their country to the British Queen, and their deputies had declared to Elizabeth that "they were a people as faithful and as great lovers of their Sovereign, as any other in Christendom."*

Towards the close of Elizabeth's reign, the Republic had finally emancipated itself from the tyranny of Spain. The age of heroism, in which the founders of empire flourish, was now settling into the age of polity, when the strength of dominion lies in the conservative wisdom of statesmen. Already the fleets of Holland had distant colonies to guard and to conquer, and the genius of commerce was fast

* Meteren, fol. 254.

supplanting that nobler spirit which had made them a nation. To renovate their diminished population, to restore their cities which betrayed the ruins of many sieges, and to fertilize the long-persecuted land of their fathers, they made their country the asylum of the world. There the fugitive became a dweller by his own hearth, and there the persecuted met his brothers gathered together to participate in the strange and general freedom. There the English Brownist retired to his conventicle; there the Portuguese Hebrew sat in his synagogue; and had the Mussulman chosen, doubtless some tall mosque had cast its shadow in the streets of Amsterdam, or Middleburgh.

The nation which invites the unhappy to become citizens, will secure patriots, and in a country where industry is the first virtue, and the sole means of existence, the excessive multiplication of a people need not raise the terrors of the political economist.

The erection of this powerful republic, or of the New States, for thus the United Provinces were at first distinguished in our country, appears to have affected England, who had reared up this infant commonwealth against its Spanish oppressors, in some respects, as the American revolution is considered to have influenced

France. The common intercourse of their mutual subjects increased, but at the same time this novel government became a refuge for all the English malcontents, equally under Elizabeth as under Charles.

There they contemplated on that toleration which was denied at home, and there they inflated their egotism with the bewitching spell of their "parity" or political equality. They viewed trade and magistracy united in the same burgomaster; nothing was regal in "the New States," but every thing plebeian, and this was more congenial to the comprehension of those fiery spirits, haughty, at least, as Venetian nobles, than even an inscription in the golden book of the Adriatic.

Elizabeth, who had already been threatened by a spiritual Republic from the Puritans, was now equally uneasy with respect to a temporal one. At the latter end of this Queen's reign, it was an usual phrase to speak and even to pray for "the Queen and State." This word *State* we are told by a very powerful writer, was learned by our neighbourhood, and commenced with the Low Countries, as if we were, or affected to be, governed by *States*. This the Queen saw, and hated; and such was the political dread in our cabinet, that at her death

the Earl of Oxford, in his propositions to James the First, warned the new monarch to prevent "this humour," i. e. the passion for democracy, among that class of malcontents, whom the writer expressively styles "Innovators, Plebicolæ, and King-haters." *

James, we shall find, hardly required this friendly hint, and long after, he himself styled the Commons the five hundred Kings! The conduct of James was, indeed, long dubious, with respect to the reception in England of these rising† "States;" he had been more civil to them in Scotland, where they had displayed a princely munificence at the baptism of Prince Henry, but now that they aspired to rank among Sovereigns, the royal etiquette was lamentably deranged.

The public affronts offered by the Spanish ambassador at our Court to the first Dutch

* An extraordinary letter *ab Ignoto*, unquestionably by a profound politician.—Cabala, p. 378.

† When James was King of Scotland, he invited "the New States" to send some envoy to be present at the baptism of Prince Henry. The presents of the higher powers were rich, but the Dutch ambassadors modestly presented two cups of fine gold, accompanied by a golden casket, which, on opening, enclosed a sealed letter—it was a grant of five thousand florins to be paid annually during the Prince's life by the States.

ambassador, Noel Caron, whom he called "the Representative of his Master's Rebels," and the reluctant civilities so grudgingly accorded by the Monarch, are pathetically narrated by the courtly Sir John Finet, in his Diary, as Master of the Ceremonies. This historian of levees and harmoniser of what, in the technical style of Court etiquette, he calls "clashes," was puzzled in what seats to place "the New States." Sometimes, he would altogether hide the Deputies, or place them apart at a public ceremony, where the Spaniard took great caution to measure out the greatest length of distance; even little Florence was mawkish, and Savoy sternly stood on precedence. The first time James saluted "the New States" as "*Messieurs les Etats*," occasioned an instant revolution in the English Cabinet; our Ministers were startled by a change of measures. This political courtesy had indeed been suggested to James in that memorable and secret conversation with Sully, when that able statesman opened that grand scheme for preserving the peace of Europe which the assassination of Henry the Fourth frustrated.

James the First, when he published his Basilicon Doron, painted with vivid touches the Anti-monarchists or Revolutionists of that

day. He describes "their imagined democracie, where they fed themselves with the hope to become *tribuni plebi;* and so in a popular government, by leading the people by the nose to bear the sway of all the rule. I was ofttimes calumniated because I was a King."

After many researches to discover the first appearance of the anti-monarchical spirit in modern Europe, I must trace English Republicanism; not to any elevated design to emulate the splendid though the unhappy democracies of Greece, nor the might and vastness of the Roman Commonwealth, but to a more obscure and ignoble source. In my opinion, we are to seek for the origin of our republican principles in that petty "discipline" of Geneva, which was substituted by Calvin for its abolished Episcopacy. This discipline, truly, was the code of that apostolical community which was suited to the infant feebleness of primitive Christianity; but this purity of Presbyters was more adapted to the polity of a parish vestry than for the government of a great empire. This, indeed, was but a religious institution, and hardly a political state, and rather threatened gorgeous hierarchies than potent monarchies.

Those, however, who had rejected their spi-

ritual, required but a single step to resist their temporal lords. And when once the cause of civil freedom had been grafted on that of the new religion, the Corahs, the Dathans, and the Abirams soon mingled with the prophets of insurgency. The Hollanders in vain seeking for a sovereign, at length found a ruler in their Religion. Applying to civil affairs the same principles of conduct and regulation which they had adopted in their spiritual concerns the Dutch, deprived of Valois, and rejected by Elizabeth, became Republicans.

The anti-monarchical, or republican principles of modern times, were doubtless influenced by two awful catastrophes, which sovereigns hurried on, in their blind rage, against their Protestant subjects—the Marian persecution in England, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew in France.

The ban of Mary had driven our fugitive religionists to Calvin's Geneva, and in that democracy their keen and wounded spirits perfected the entire theory of Anti-monarchy, the holy duty of insurrection, the power of deposing kings, and the possible justice of assassinating tyrants. It assumed, that all legitimate government was solely derived from the people themselves; or, in the words of Buchanan,

"*Populus rege est prestantior et melior*,"—"the people are better than the King, and of greater authority." These republican doctrines, the Scotchman John Knox, and the Englishman, Christopher Goodman, as if the bearers of a new mission from Heaven, for their style was scriptural, promulgated in their native countries, as a new revelation, which was to abrogate that to which the world had hitherto assented. But I must not here anticipate a subject which may enter into our future inquiries.

The reader, however, must now learn, that there existed a communion of principles among the foreign Calvinists and our own. The same principles produced that unity of conduct which we observe in both countries. Knox frequently appeals to his foreign connexions as a sanction for his acts and his axioms; and we know how these were applauded by the great founder of this novel system—the atrabilarious and apostolical Calvin.

Those revolutions in public opinion, which are silently operating, without yet manifesting any overt acts, can only be detected in those histories of mankind which are furnished by themselves—Books! These are the precursors, or the recorders, of whatever is passing in Europe. There is a philosophy in the aridity

of bibliography which few bibliographers have discovered; there is a chronology of ideas as well as facts; and the date of an opinion is far more interesting than any on the Colophons.

The massacre of Paris occurred in 1572: nine years before, appeared an anonymous work, by a protestant, which inculcated the doctrines which Knox had so warmly espoused. Many passages in the Scriptures were applied against the authority of kings, and of magistrates established by kings.* The Protestants, who had not all entered so deeply into these theological politics, were shocked at the avowal of principles which tended to subvert the government; and to give a public testimony that Protestants were not rebels, the book was solemnly consigned to the flames by a Protestant assembly.

The massacre which struck all Europe with horror, except the heartless bigots who have framed apologies for sanguinary politics, was the occasion of producing a multiplicity of what the French historians denominate "seditious writings." One put forth a dialogue on the power, the authority, and the duty of princes, and the liberty of the people. Ano-

* Thuanus, Lib. LVII.

ther inquires into the nature of the obedience due to the magistrate, according to the word of God, and infers that the oppressed subject may arm against the sovereign. Another on "Voluntary Slavery" would shame the timorous into revolt. One of the most ingenious inventions of the Anti-monarchial party in France, at this period, was "an advice on the means of establishing the perfect despotism of Turkey," said to have been presented to the King, Catherine de Medicis, and the Duke of Anjou, by a traveller, one Chevalier Poncet. This Chevalier, after having detailed every mode of arbitrary power, being interrogated how such a government could be established in France, furnishes some nefarious propositions which exceed the inventions of Machiavel. The Chevalier, who was a real personage, indignantly asserted that the whole was a calumny. It is more certain that it forms one of the severest satires of the abuses of royalty which was ever penned. In a rejoinder to Poncet, he is reproached for having been the occasion of hastening the Parisian massacre.

These, however, were but rude beginnings; there were better workmen, intent on more elaborate works, and who, having adopted the great revolution in the public mind, gave

coherence to looser principles, and converted into a terrible system these novel doctrines.

The "Franco-Gallia" of the learned Hotman, lays down for its first principle, that the crown of France was not hereditary as the estates of individuals; that men formerly ascended the throne by the votes of the nobles and the people; and that females, in all times, were incapacitated to perform any acts of royalty. It is a rather curious fact, that in this fervour against monarchical power, at this moment, one of the objects of attack was the domination of women! Mary of England; the two Maries of Scotland; Elizabeth of England; Margaret Duchess of Parma, the governess of Flanders; Catherine de Medicis; and other females, were the rulers of Europe, and all Romanists, except our Elizabeth. Knox, indeed, had already preceded Hotman by his famous "first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment (government) of women." Hotman and Knox, in the course of events, were placed in a similar dilemma. On the accession of Henry the Fourth in France, the principles of Hotman were alleged by the opposite party against the right of his royal patron, and Hotman had to confute his own arguments, in which it is said he was not unsuccessful.

When the Protestant Elizabeth succeeded her Roman sister, Knox, who had anathematised female dominion, contrived an artful salvo; he offered to maintain the Queen's authority if her Majesty would consider her right of sovereignty as a miraculous exception, and as an extraordinary dispensation of Providence.

Among the great works which have survived these anti-monarchical books, is the famous "*Vindiciæ contrà Tyrannos*," which bears on its title the portentous pseudonym of Junius Brutus. The theme is of a loftier nature, concerning the legitimate power of the Prince over the people, and the people over the Prince. It is the work of an ardent republican who leans entirely on the side of democracy. Hubert Languet, the credited writer, had composed the celebrated apology of the Prince of Orange, when he was put under the ban and edict of the Spanish monarch. The doctrines of Buchanan, in his famous work, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*, assert the most positive and comprehensive anti-monarchical principles. All these books appeared before 1580, and betray a perfect unity of anti-monarchical principles.

But we must now look for acts as well as writings. When these novel politicians of Geneva had assumed as their grand postula-

tum, that all legitimate government originates with the people—that religion, politics, sovereign power, and, we may add, sovereign wisdom, all came from the multitude, they were sure by this flattery of the people every where to find willing auditors. "We are a hundred thousand strong," exclaimed one of the ecstatic seers of revolt. But Knox, and men like himself, well knew that "the commonalty" were hands, and not heads. The oracle was therefore delivered as Knox has it, that "God has appointed the Nobility to bridle the inordinate appetites of Princes."

From that moment, a new brotherhood was formed, which bound together the discontented grandee with the meanest of the people. "The commonalty" could not establish themselves in power but by the nobles, nor could the turbulent noble support his ambition by a more formidable instrument than the people. It was long before the people discovered that they were only engaging in the quarrels of the few, in which they had no concern whatever, and that the interests of their chiefs were often distinct from the cause which they had openly adopted.

It might have been supposed that this principle would have produced a similar mode of

action as speedily in England as in France. Yet it so happened, from the nature of circumstances, that it was in France that first appeared the design of establishing republics. The Geneva politicians did not frame ordinances in Parliament till long after!

During the weak minority of Louis the Thirteenth, the French Protestants had become so formidable, that they held in equilibrium the power of the Sovereign after three civil wars. They had followed up the oracular decree of Knox:—any fiery Prince of the blood—any Duke who aimed at an independent sovereignty—any nobleman who had a quarrel with his family—passed over to the Protestants. It was well known that many of the French dukes, who were at the head of the Protestants, were none of their well-wishers, and that many of their leaders held all their Protestantism at the point of their sword. Yet Princes, Dukes, and Counts, perpetually adopting the cause of the Reformed, conferred on them that power and consideration which a sect of itself never could have acquired.

As late as in 1621, the Huguenots, in their assembly at La Rochelle, had formally declared the erection of federative Republics in France; they had divided France into circles, and had

even assigned to each department its respective "commandant." This new Republic, which was avowedly formed on the model of the Republic of Holland, we are assured by a very judicious historian,* would have been finally established, had the leaders united in their views. It was chiefly by their divisions that Richelieu succeeded, in course of time, in annihilating this powerful faction. There were among the Protestants a considerable party who were not republicans,—a circumstance which often occasioned the most contrary or ambiguous conduct; the republicans, anxious to manifest to the world what their monarchical companions were as anxious to conceal. This strange discordance appeared when the assembly of La Rochelle resolved on having a new seal engraved to stamp their commissions and ordinances. The Genevan system, politics grafted on religion, discovered itself in an extraordinary manner, by the design on the seal of La Rochelle. An angel leaning on a cross, was holding a book high in the air, bearing the Latin inscription—*Pro Christo et Rege* (for Christ and the King;) but by the ambi-dexterous contrivance of the state-engraver, who had to obey two very different masters, the

* Père Griffet, xvi. 284.

true reading was—*Pro Christo et Grege* (for Christ and the flock.) This was effected by faintly engraving the G, which the sharper eyes of the republicans exultingly traced, and appealed to as an evidence that they had thrown off the yoke of monarchy, and were only obeying the Republic, which they sanctified as "the flock of Jesus Christ."

Had Charles the First been as well acquainted as ourselves with the secret history of his brother, Louis the Thirteenth, and the factions at his Court, how often might this Monarch have contemplated on an image of events, which afterwards were connected with his own fortunes, and he might have taken even a perspective view of a new Republic in Europe, the precursor of that wonderful one, whose first public act was the most astonishing deed ever done in civilized Governments—the execution of their Sovereign!

It can hardly be doubted, for it is in the natural course of human events, that the republicanism of the Rochellers must have been wafted over the seas to our shores; and that the Genevan system of politics and religion, already not new to our country, received a considerable impulse by the heroes who had combated, and the sages who had counselled in that

memorable siege, and who were now fugitives and emigrants in England.

The rigid monarchists of our country do not appear to have been insensible of the tendency of these new doctrines, and could hardly discern the nice point which separated rebellion from reformation. As early as in 1628, Republicanism in the House of Commons was more than suspected by Charles the First, which appears by the very denial of the House itself—for they declare, that "Nothing so endangers us with his Majesty as that opinion that *we are anti-monarchically affected*," and they proceed to declare that, "had they to choose a government, it would be this monarchy of England above all governments in the world." But it is not the minority which draw up public addresses. That there was a *Republican party in the House of Commons* before 1645, the period at which Mr. Hallam declares it had not yet entered the House, is unquestionably proved by those curious conversations which Clarendon has given in his "Life," between himself, Nathaniel Fiennes, and Henry Martin, which occurred in 1641.

They had partaken of a political dinner at Pym's lodgings, where Hampden, Sir Arthur Haslerigg, and others of the party, clubbed

together. Fiennes, in riding out with him, communicated to Hyde, who they were solicitous to gain over, their firm determination to extirpate the hierarchy; but a day or two afterwards, Henry Martin opened himself with more freedom; that witty and unprincipled man declaring, that, as for some particular men who governed the House, he thought they were knaves; but when they had done as much as they intended to do, they should be used as they had others. Hyde pressing to know what they intended, Henry Martin, after a little pause, summoned resolution, however, to let Hyde into the grand secret, by roundly answering, "I do not think one man wise enough to govern us all."

Clarendon, it is true, declares that this was the first word he had ever heard spoken to that purpose. But we cannot infer from this, that it would have been new to many others—it fell from the lips of a great Republican in Parliament in 1641. We may be quite certain, that the establishment of a Commonwealth, even at that time, would not have had only the single vote of Henry Martin. I would answer for Haslerigg, and have no doubt of Nathaniel. It was, indeed, too early to have carried the motion through the House. Such

mighty changes are hewn and laboured out of the mass only by degrees, and the frankness of Harry Martin would not have been imitated by those, who, though equally intent on the same design, would not, however, dare to be equally open.

The awful controversies between the Monarch and the Parliament; the arbitrary measures to which the royal distresses had driven Charles; the popular terror of papistry; the principles of passive obedience to "the divine right" of Church and State; the pseudo-Brutus Felton, who, in his self-devotion, seemed to the kingdom to rise in glory from the refulgent stroke of a patriot's poignard; all these were the elements of the Spirit of Republicanism. Men were to speak, in those times; we had yet no Sidneys and Lockes; opinions and feelings are long silently propagated before they can assume the lasting form of published works. In the history of mankind, there is one moral principle as certain in its effects, as we find in the physical world is that of gravitation; it is the re-action of our natures. In the indissoluble chain of human events, things make themselves without being made, for the last seem only consequences of those which precede them. Passive obedience inculcated in a mo-

narchy engenders the opposite principle of the popular freedom of republicanism. Man, in changing his posture, imagines he finds relief, by placing himself in quite a contrary attitude.

Already the lower classes of society were formed for democratic notions; but with them it was long limited to the Hierarchy. Armed with the sacred Scriptures, they applied the revolutionary events, and quoted the democratic style in which the historical parts abound; but as, in the spirit of the "parity" of the presbytery of Geneva, they only deemed Bishops as "the tail of the Beast," these pious fanatics need not at present enter into our consideration.

But a new race was rising, who were now carrying their theoretical ideas of government into anti-monarchical views; men who, twenty years afterwards, became the founders of the English Commonwealth. It would be a preposterous notion to imagine that the Monarchy of England could be suddenly changed into a Republic, unless men's minds had been long in training to hazard such a political empiricism.

I have often considered that the stern republicanism and the personal hatred of Charles the First, which so strongly characterised our

immortal Milton, was early imbibed; not only from his first tutor, the "puritan in Essex who cut his hair short,"—as Aubrey, in his colloquial meanness of style, describes a learned man, who abandoned his country, but returning under the Protectorate, had the Mastership of Jesus College, Cambridge, assigned to him—there was another of his associates calculated to form his anti-monarchical feelings; a man more remarkable than famous.

Milton's second tutor, and beloved friend, was Alexander Gill, the son of Dr. Gill, master of St. Paul's School, and usher under his father. We know of this intimacy by three latin epistles addressed to Gill by Milton, and to the honour of Gill be it told, he entertained a just conception of his immortal pupil. Gill, who appears to have led an unsettled and turbulent life, was not scrupulous in concealing his sentiments; and they were expressed in the vulgar tone of the lowest democracy. He conducted himself so indecently when a reading clerk in the chapel service, that the scholars of Trinity tossed him in a blanket. Wood notices, that he was frequently imprisoned; and when he succeeded his father in the Mastership of St. Paul's School, he was compelled to retire from that honourable office in 1635, on complaints of his

extreme severity, if not cruelty, to the scholars, a circumstance to which Jonson alludes:—

"To be the Denis of thy father's school."

Of such a man, not ill-adapted to become even a founder of the English Commonwealth, which he did not, however, live to witness, we shall not be surprised to find, that speaking and acting throughout life without restraint, naturally produced one,—for he was at length put into the Star-Chamber. It was at Trinity College cellar, that Gill drank a health to honest Jack (Felton), with a gentle comment, that he was sorry he had deprived him of the honour of doing that brave act; that the Duke had gone down to Hell to see King James—and of bad to give the worse, that the King (Charles) was fitter to stand in a Cheapside shop, with an apron before him, and say "*what lack ye?*" than to govern a kingdom. In the manuscript letter which gives this account, I find that the offensive words concerning his Majesty were not read in open court. But Gill had long indulged his democratic spirit, for he had kept up a political correspondence with the great Chillingworth for some years, in which, as Aubrey confesses it, "they used to nibble at State matters." Chillingworth is

censured for having betrayed this confidential intercourse to Laud, when in one of his letters Gill distinguishes James and Charles, as "the old fool and the young one." We shall not be surprised to find, at this period, that this fiery Revolutionist was brought into the Star-Chamber, sentenced to lose one ear at London, and the other at Oxford, and, as usual, heavily fined two thousand pounds. The tears of the old doctor, when supplicating on his knees before the King, and his petition being backed by Laud, the penalty was mitigated, and the ears were spared. As Laud was not usually merciful on these occasions, I am inclined to think that Chillingworth, who has been blackened by his treachery, had not given his information without a promise of Laud's intercession—perhaps he meant only to check our radical Gill, whose republican feelings appear by a silly satire of the day—

> Thy alehouse barking 'gainst the King
> And all his brave and noble Péers.

It is clear that Gill had anticipated the Republic about to be; in such affairs there is always a forlorn hope, who must be first sacrificed. That Gill's illustrious pupil was influenced by his democratic turn of mind, and that he appears to

have caught some portion of his friend's severity to his pupils, and that they were both staunch republicans before even Charles came to the throne, cannot be doubtful. Milton and Gill can only be considered as the representatives of a large class of that new race, who, in theory or in practice, were prepared to advocate anti-monarchical principles.

On this subject of "republican politics," there is a remarkable circumstance connected with an extraordinary character, whose name appears in our history, but the story of whose life, could it now be obtained, would probably throw new lights on the secret history of that party, which for a short but fatal period was predominant.

The circumstance which I am about to disclose requires a preliminary anecdote concerning two eminent persons,—a baffled historian, and a minister of state.

Fulke Greville, the first Lord Brooke, who, among his greatest honours, was most desirous to be remembered by posterity as "the friend of Sir Philip Sidney," was also the patron of Camden and Speed, a votary of poetry and history!

He had once designed a life of his late mistress, Queen Elizabeth, from which he had

only been deterred by the political trepidations of the famous Secretary Cecil. In an amusing anecdote of the historical inquirer and the Minister, we may detect the insurmountable objections of a statesman to the inconvenience of contemporary history.

On the first request of the future historian, his friend the Minister warmly embraced his proposal, and promised to furnish his warrant for researches among the State papers. At a second interview, the Minister strangely shifted his ground, and turning short on the inquirer after truth, wondered how Sir Fulke could dream out his time in writing a story, when no one was a more rising man than himself—(a whisper of preferment!);—then he expostulated on the danger of delivering many things of the former reign, which might be prejudicial to the present. A writer of history, replied the half-disappointed historian, though bound to tell nothing but the truth, was not, he presumed, equally bound to tell all the truth; he was to spare the tenderness of individuals or families, nor was he to injure the existing interests of governments. This seemed a compromise, and came so unexpectedly on the Minister, that he had nothing to add; but as he had settled his resolution before the visit of

the historian, he closed the conversation, by informing him, that "the council-chest must not lie open without his Majesty's approbation." The baffled writer of history, who had already degraded his office by offering to be the discloser of half-truths, now gave up his projected history in despair; aware, as he expresses it, that "sheet after sheet was to be reviewed" by other eyes than his own, and that so many alterations would be required, that his history would turn out to be "a story of other men's writing, with my name only put to it."

The passion for history had not, however, diminished in the breast of its votary; and about 1628, Sir Fulke Greville, now become Lord Brooke, founded an Historical Lecture at Cambridge, endowing it with no penurious salary for that day—one hundred pounds per annum. Why an Englishman was not found worthy of the professorship has not been told. The founder invited the learned Vossius of Leyden to fill this chair; but the States of Holland having at that moment augmented his pension, Vossius recommended to his lordship, Dr. Dorislaus, an excellent scholar and a doctor in civil law.

The learned Hollander, so early as in 1628, was sent down to Cambridge by Lord Brooke,

with the King's letters to the Vice-chancellor, and the heads of colleges, who immediately complied with the design of the noble institutor of this new professorship.

Dr. Dorislaus delivered two or three lectures on Tacitus, but he had not yet gone beyond the first words, *Urbem Romanam primo Reges habuere*, when he discovered that he was addressing critical ears. He disserted on the change of government in Rome from kings to consuls, by the suggestion of Junius Brutus; he dwelt on the power of the people; and touching on the excesses of Tarquin, who had violated the popular freedom which the people had enjoyed under his predecessors, he launched out in vindication of his own country in wresting their liberties from the tyranny of the Spanish monarchs.

There was a tone of democracy in the lectures of the Dutchman, a spirit of republican fierceness to which the heads of houses had not yet been accustomed; and though the Doctor had particularly excepted such monarchies as those of England, where he said "the people had surrendered their rights to the King, so that in truth there could be no just exception taken against the sovereign," yet the Master of Peter-house, quick at analogies, and

critical at deductions, communicating with the master of Christ College and the Vice-chancellor, a murmur rose which reached London, and at length the King's ear, of the tendency of these republican doctrines.* Dr. Dorislaus at first offered to clear himself before the heads of houses; he proposed to dispatch letters to his patron, and other eminent personages, to explain his opinions, but at length resolving to address himself personally to Lord Brooke, he suddenly suppressed these letters, observing, that "he would see an accuser, before he replied to an accusation."

What occurred at Court is obscure. The Bishop of Winchester, in his Majesty's name, suspended our history-lecturer; but shortly after, the suspension was annulled, and the Doctor allowed to return to his chair. Fuller, who alludes to this transaction, tells us that "Dorislaus was accused to the King, troubled at Court, and after his submission hardly restored to his place." His first patron however, who differed in his political sentiments from his successor, the republican Lord Brooke, in a letter to the Doctor requested that he would retire

* The idea of these lectures I found in Archbishop Usher's Life, by Parr. Letter 393, from one who says, "we fear we shall lose the lectures."

to his own country, assuring him, however, of his stipend during life. Lord Brooke, shortly after this generous offer, was assassinated by his servant.

The Doctor, it is certain, never contemplated returning to his republic, and it is suspected that he had his reasons. This scholar and adventurer was "a fair conditioned man," as indeed appears by his portrait. He married an Englishwoman, was established a Professor at Gresham College—and this foreigner, whom Fuller describes as "a Dutchman very anglicised in language and behaviour," became a very important personage in the great Revolution of the land of his adoption.

A history of this Dutch Doctor of Civil Laws, and Republican, would furnish a subject of considerable interest in our own political history. Although we have not hitherto been enabled to trace the private life of this remarkable character, for the long interval of twenty years, in which he was settled in this country, yet it is quite evident, that during this period he cultivated an intimate intercourse with the English Republicans of that day; for he became their chief counsellor, a participator in their usurpations, and acted in a high station in the Commonwealth. His death was not less political than his life.

The first patron of Dr. Dorislaus, Fulke Greville, afterwards Lord Brooke, was succeeded in his title by his cousin, Robert Greville, whom he had adopted as his son. The young Lord was then scarcely of age, and the republican sentiments of the second Lord Brooke, imbibed by the generous temper of youth, were so opposite to the monarchical character of the first Lord, that we have no difficulty in discovering his tutor in his own historical lecturer of Cambridge. In the dreams of his soul, lofty views of human nature broke forth, and in a romantic passion of patriotism and misanthropy, he had planned, with another discontented noble Lord Say and Sele, to fly to the forests of New England, to enjoy that delusive freedom which he conceived that he had lost in the Old.

Whether Dr. Dorislaus would have accompanied his pupil, and have forsaken the Academy of Gresham for an American savannah, may be doubted. The Doctor had abandoned his own Republic for a more comforting abode in a Monarchy. The founders of sects are often very different in their views and temperaments to their proselytes. A cool head has often inflamed hot ones, as water feeds fire. Lord Brooke's motives were the purest which human nature can experience, yet such a seces-

sion from our father-land may be condemned as betraying more sullenness than patriotism.

It was this Lord Brooke who afterwards sided with the Parliament, and whose extraordinary prayer, on the day of his death, at the storming of the church-close at Litchfield, has been adduced by those who presume to explore into the secret ways of Providence, as a demonstration of what they are pleased to term particular providences, or judgments, while the opposite party, who do not object to these divine catastrophes whenever they happen to their enemies, never recognise one in the fate of their friend; thus it happens that the man whom one party considers as the object of divine vengeance, is exalted by the other into the beatitude of a saint. It would have been more reasonable to have remarked, that this very prayer, from the pure and noble mind of Lord Brooke, perhaps argued some painful doubts about the cause which he had espoused, and for which he was to die.

If we consider the intimacy which this Lord Brooke must necessarily have cherished with the historical Professor placed on the foundation of his relative, and the whole tenor of his lordship's actions, from his early days, it will be evident that this noble enthusiast was the

political pupil of his republican Professor of Civil Law.

When the rebellion or the revolution broke out, our speculative philosopher, Doctor Dorislaus, became a practical politician. The notions of government which he maintained well suited that base minority, who in those unhappy days triumphed over the monarchy and the aristocracy of England, and an indissoluble bond of political connection was formed between Dorislaus and the popular chiefs. The Dutch Doctor of Civil Law became their learned Counsellor, and their resolute agent, and the political adventurer received the gratitude of the co-partners and the profits of the co-partnership. We discover Doctor Dorislaus as the Judge Advocate in Essex's army; we find Doctor Dorislaus presiding as one of the Judges of the Admiralty; we behold the republican foreigner standing between the Attorney and the Solicitor Generals at the trial of the King of England; and when his ability had served the English Commonwealth so zealously at home, we see him commissioned by his friends in power, to return to his native land, as their representative —the ambassador of England!

There, when scarcely arrived, and in a manner the most unexpected, the Doctor termi-

nated his career. His character was too flagrant not to attract the notice and indignation of the English emigrants. Some Cavaliers, maddened by loyalty and passion, who knew how actively Dorislaus had occupied himself in forwarding the unparalleled catastrophe which the world had witnessed, avenged the murder of their sovereign by an unpardonable crime—the crime of assassination. A party rushed into his apartment while he was at supper, and dispatched the ambassador of the new Commonwealth.

This foreigner must have obtained an ascendancy in the Government not yet entirely discovered, and had been most intimately consulted on the events of the times, and more particularly in the conduct of the most criminal of the acts of the men in power.

This appeared by the predominant party decreeing him a public funeral, attended by the Council of State, the Judges, and the whole Parliament. Evelyn has chronicled this public funeral for "the villain who managed the trial against the King."

It has been urged in favour of Dorislaus, that he did not speak at the trial of the King. It is probable that this foreigner might not have acquired all the fluency of forensic elocution

necessary to address those who were called the English people, on an occasion so tremendously solemn. Those, moreover, who had been forced up into supreme power, might also have still retained some slight remains of decorum, and scarcely have desired that a stranger, with a foreign accent, should plead for the English people against their Sovereign. But was Dorislaus less active because he was mute? As a civilian, he was most competent to draw up the indictment, such as it was; and he acted so important a part in the trial itself, that in the print we may observe this Dutch Doctor standing between the Commonwealth's Council, Cooke and Aske.

Such is the story of Doctor Dorislaus, a foreigner who was more busied in our history than appears by the pages of our historians. The concealed design of his historical lectures, when the professorship was first founded at Cambridge, seemed doubtful to many, but less so to discerning judgments. The whole tenor of the professor's life must now remove all doubts. Dr. Dorislaus was a political adventurer, a Republican by birth and principle, the native of a land where, in the youthhood of the Republic, a nation's independence had broke forth; there was no small town, scarcely an ob-

scure spot, which did not commemorate some stratagem of war, some night assault, some voluntary immolation, or which bore not the vestige of some glorious deed. There the siege had famished the city; there the dyke, broken by the patriot's hand, had inundated his own province. The whole face of the country was covered with associations of unconquered patriotism.

Dorislaus had willingly deserted this popular freedom and poverty to endure the servitude of monarchy in ease and competence. The Dutch Republican consented to join the English people, to adopt his own expressions, in "surrendering their rights to their sovereign." Perhaps he afterwards deemed that "the majesty of the people" retained the power of revoking their grant. His Roman intrepidity, if our lecturer on the seven Kings of Rome ever possessed it, was now lurking among intriguers, and his republican pride at length was sharing in the common spoil.

Such is the picture of a Republican whose name appears in our history, and who acted a remarkable part in it, but who has not hitherto received the notice which he claims.

From all which we have observed, we would infer that the republican party must have long

prevailed before it could enter into the House of Commons, where we find these anti-monarchists several years before the period assigned by the constitutional historian.

I have thus endeavoured to throw some light upon the origin in modern Europe, and particularly in England, of that mighty principle which produced such tremendous effects in the era which is the subject of our investigation. We have detected it in its secret birth, we have observed it passive in theory, we have witnessed it repressed by the strong arm of authority. We are now approaching the epoch of its open, its active, and its triumphant career. A monarchy subverted, an aristocracy abolished, a hierarchy abrogated, are results which never could have taken place without the exertion by all parties of a power of thought, and an energy of action, without the occurrence of a variety of events, and the appearance of a diversity of characters, the study of which should teach us in some degree, how to think and how to act, how to contemplate events, and how to judge men. It is when considering the age of which we treat, in this political and moral point of view, that I have often been inclined to conclude, that in a right understanding of the life

and reign of Charles the First, are involved most of those subjects, the knowledge of which is valuable and necessary to all men, at all times, but above all, to Englishmen!

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